

YOUTH TODAY BEIJING

今日青年

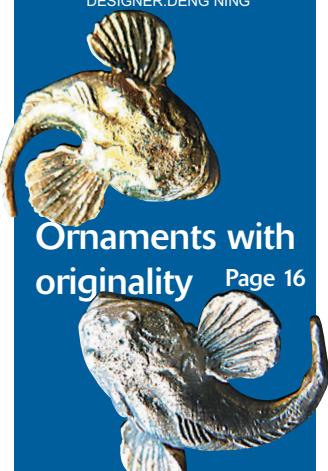
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Ornaments with originality Page 16

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Mark of the dragon



Omar Galliani's sketches are done in pencil, charcoal and crayon on *xuan* paper, a delicate surface traditionally reserved for calligraphy and wash painting. Each piece, inspired by the female world, is stamped with a red dragon.

The artist's work connects this royal symbol of ancient China with patterns associated with ancient Italian alchemy in one example of cultural fusion.

Read more on Page 8



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To Tibet on foot

Follow this hiker's journey from Sichuan to Tibet. Tips abound for would-be vagabonds who have the same strong minds – and feet.



Page 4

Easy days are over

Foreign acts are no longer guaranteed gigs. Many of the overseas bands flocking to China are learning the market's gold is already gone.



Page 15

Balloons the new flowers?

Balloon Queen hopes to convince the country that these helium-filled spheres can be more than just party favors.



Shaolin monks start soccer team

By Han Manman

Dressed in a yellow robe, one young monk stepped onto the back of his teammate to launch himself into the air and strike a soccer ball to score a goal.

It was not a scene from Stephen Chow's comedy film *Shaolin Soccer*, but an actual exercise at the recently opened Shaolin Temple Soccer School in Zhengzhou, Henan Province.

The school, funded by its namesake temple, will train monks in both kung fu and soccer with the intent of creating a new generation of soccer stars.

"We are not attempting to further hype the Shaolin Temple's name. We want the school to make real contributions to Chinese soccer so our country can have its own Ronaldo," said Shi Yanlu, head coach.

Shi said the thousand-year history of Shaolin martial arts and soccer are a perfect match, and that the skills needed for both are quite similar.

He said another coach from Cameroon has been invited to train the students.

"There is a lot of talent and potential in the school, and the students range in age from 4 to 20. The training they endure here could be useful in any future sporting career," Shi said.

Shi said the school has more than 10,000 students studying kung fu, some of whom will be tapped for the soccer program. The school plans to select the students who excel to create a professional Shaolin soccer team.

Reactions across the country have been mixed.

Xu Jichun, vice president of Henan's soccer league, called the project useful and innovative. He



Young monks from Shaolin Temple learn to apply kung fu to soccer.

IC Photo

said he was concerned because the team lacks a soccer field and is playing on a brick surface, which could cause injury.

Wang Suisheng, vice president of the province's Jianye Football Club, said Shaolin's school would be good for soccer development, agreeing with the similarities between kung fu and

soccer that Shi pointed out.

But one netizen named Fengzi lambasted the project as another publicity stunt.

"The school is getting attention primarily because the Chinese national team is so disappointing. It's sad that our only hope for a soccer savior is a few monks with no expe-

rience," Fengzi said. "Soccer is soccer – not a kung fu demonstration. The game has its things like rules."

He said it would be amazing if the monks can join the national team and help it qualify for the World Cup.

"That's probably too much to hope," he said.

Tourism island extends stays for foreign yachts

Yachts registered with foreign governments will be allowed to dock up to 183 days per year off the coast of Hainan Province.

The new regulation takes effect April 15 and represented a massive increase from the current limit of 15 days.

The regulation is part of a plan to boost the yachting sector of the famed island to attract wealthy tourists from abroad.

Under the new law, foreign yachts can dock for a maximum of 30 days on each visit. Docking sessions can be extended twice for a maximum of 90 days, said a spokesman at Hainan Customs who was reading from the new law on Wednesday.

The combined duration of all days docked during a year would be limited to 183 days, the spokesman said.

The tropical island is attempting to turn yachting into one of the pillars of local tourism before 2015, according to the province's development plan.

It also plans to build 13 more yacht ports, said Chen Zhipeng, deputy chief of Hainan Customs. It currently has three.

Haikou Customs said eight foreign yachts docked during 2009. Last year, that number grew to 64.

The provincial government announced a plan early last year to transform the island into a top international tourism destination by 2020.

(Xinhua)

Jinan law makes community a barrier to pet ownership

By Zhao Hongyi

Keeping pets and finding a way to protect neighbors from them is a delicate balancing act in many cities.

This week, the government of Jinan, capital of Shandong Province, passed a revised law that requires neighbors and community authorities to sign a permission slip before the Jinan Police Bureau will process a pet license.

But the new requirement has been heavily criticized.

"How do we define 'neighbors' in an apartment complex?" a man surnamed Zhang asked on dzwww.com, a local portal website. "Does it mean we need signatures from every resident in the building?"

"The revision might stir up conflicts with neighbors," said Li Meng, an elderly resident. "I really doubt this new law is going to survive in practice."

Li used to keep dogs in her yard but stopped when her family relocated to a downtown apartment.

The new law was also criticized by community managers.

"We can only certify whether a person is or is not a resident in our community. How can we certify whether a dog is or is not living in our community?" said Tian Jin, community worker in the Worker's New Village, a newly residential community in the city.

Tian said the revision transfers responsibility from the regulators and supervisors to already overworked community leaders.

Pets, especially dogs, are a touchy issue in cities. Many pet lovers say their animal is a warm and honest companion. Many neighbors, however, complain the pets are a disturbance, a source of pollution and a danger to the

community.

Pets were prohibited in urban areas between 1960 and 1970. The economic reforms of the late 1970s lifted these restrictions opening up a host of new residential conflicts.

"Our goal is to make pet owners aware of the dangers their animal poses and to make them exercise self-discipline," said Wen Changji, an officer who issues pet licenses at the Jinan Public Security Bureau.

The number of dog-related conflicts and disputes in Jinan has risen steadily over the years, Wen said. Many residents in the city raise dogs as though they still lived in the countryside and ignore the animals' impact on neighbors and the environment.

"Our goal is that our residents can find respect for their neighbors and develop more civi-



Would-be pet owners in Jinan must first get permission from their neighbors.

CFP Photo

lized habits by following the law," Wen said.

He would not explain how collecting signatures would achieve this.

However, Wen's view was supported by Fu Qiang, a lawyer at Zhongqiang Lawyer House.

"Residents in Jinan used to and still do love to raise big dogs. But these large animals can injure or endanger humans.

The new law is reasonable as long as people follow its requirements," Fu said.

While he does not like that community authorities are being brought into the process, he did say the new requirements would give them a clearer picture of what types of dogs are in their area before signing off so the police can issue a pet license.

Writers finger Baidu as Web's top pirate

By Zhang Dongya

Baidu, the country's top search engine, is under fire once again for rampant copyright infringement, this time from a coalition of writers.

The search giant has been criticized many times for trampling on the property rights of music artists. While many users find its piracy services convenient, the question of how content creators can enforce their rights remains unresolved.

Writers unite

Fifty Chinese writers, including Han Han and Jia Pingwa, signed a letter of protest stating that Baidu is giving away their copyrighted works without their consent at Baidu Wenku, the site's online library.

The letter was composed by Murong Xuecun, an Internet novelist, on March 15 – the International Day for Protecting Consumers' Rights. Signatories include leaders of several provincial writers associations, renowned contemporary novelists and bestselling young authors.

"This is the first time such a wide range of writers has united to fight Baidu's piracy, which is the world's largest coordinated effort to infringe on copyrights," Murong said.

"Baidu Wenku has collected almost everything we have created. Anyone can download the books and read for free, but Baidu has not obtained the necessary permission from any of us. The company is stealing: it is stealing our works, our rights and our property," Murong wrote.

Baidu was also criticized for providing music for download. The letter said it is directly responsible for the collapse of the entire Chinese recording industry, and that writers fear it may subject their publishers to the same fate.

Baidu's response

Baidu has not taken any action.

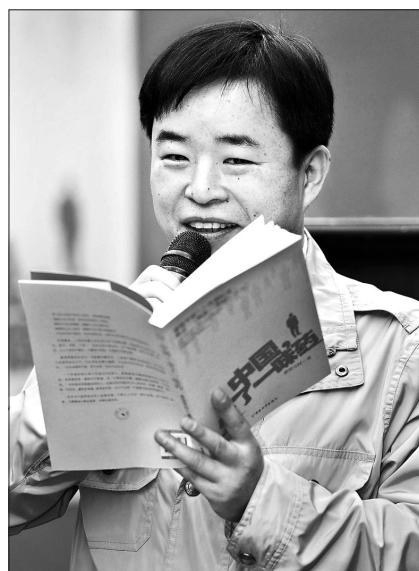
A spokesman for the company said it has nothing to say regarding the protest, and that its Baidu Wenku service will continue to operate as usual.

Baidu Wenku was launched as a text-sharing platform in 2009. Users who upload text to its database are rewarded with virtual points. And users can pull text from the database without paying in either currency or virtual points.

The front page states that Baidu Wenku contains more than 20 million documents. A news ticker on the front page ranks the



Baidu is currently involved in numerous disputes for infringing on the copyrights of musicians and writers.



Murong Xuecun's latest book, published last year, is illegally available on Baidu Wenku.



Writers fear that piracy services like Baidu Wenku may erode the book publishing market.

CFP Photos

most popular documents of the week and the top contributors.

The Literature category contains about 2.8 million texts, both public domain classics such as *The Romance of the West Chamber* and current bestsellers by Han Han. Some current English fiction, including *Harry Potter* by British author J. K. Rowling and *Twilight* by Stephenie Meyer, is also available.

"Baidu pays great attention to the protection of intellectual property rights, and we have promised from the outset that writers and copyright holders can report problematic content on Baidu Wenku and have it removed within 48 hours," said a Baidu spokesman who refused to be named.

The company claims to have deleted more than 10,000 infringing texts using the complaint system.

Controversy

Current laws to protect prop-

erty rights on the Internet date back to 2006. The law contains a "Safe Harbor" provision that exempts websites that store and provide copyrighted material from damages if they respond promptly to complaints of infringement.

But Baidu has been criticized for abusing these provisions.

"It is obvious that Baidu has attempted to curate which works appear on its site. Safe Harbor protections do not apply to websites that make an effort to moderate or vet their collections of offending material," Chen Rubo, a tort lawyer, said.

Last year, Shengda Literature, an online literature company, accused the search giant of infringement. The case has yet to be resolved.

Hou Xiaoqiang, CEO of Shengda, said as many as 95 percent of the novels published by his company are available on Baidu Wenku. He said the infringement

has caused the company to lose more than 1 billion yuan per year.

While many on the Internet do not condone piracy, some would prefer the current "sharing" situation to remain unchanged.

"I support Baidu Wenku because I don't believe the low income of writers is due to Internet sharing. I will still pay money to buy books by good authors. Since Internet literature [like Murong Xuecun's] originated on the Internet, it should remain free there," Ouyang Xiaoyao, a microblogger, said.

Some suggested Baidu open a micropayment system that would return a percentage of each sale to the author.

The writers have named several representatives, including Zhang Hongbo, deputy director-general of China Written Works Copyright Society, and Lu Jinbo, general manager of Wanrong Book, to negotiate with Baidu.

Murong Xuecun wrote on his

microblog that the first round of negotiations may begin today.

According to *The People's Daily*'s online edition, Wang Zhicheng, deputy director of the Department of Copyright Administration of National Copyright Administration, said he supports the writers' right's for protection Tuesday.

He said Baidu has submitted a corrective action report to the National Copyright Administration, which has authorized Beijing Municipal Bureau of Copyright to begin an investigation.

The Beijing Municipal Bureau of Copyright said Baidu's case is still being investigated.

"This time, we are aiming to protect writers' copyrights. But the greater goal is to solve Baidu's infringement problems once and for all. Only after that will we discuss compensation plans," said Zhang Hongbo, deputy director-general of China Written Works Copyright Society.

The day the music boom died

By Wang Yu

When the local music scene exploded five years ago, fans were eager for anything. To feed the need, numerous live venues opened to provide a stage for local bands and foreign artists seeking opportunity in the Far East.

Promoters, banking on the groups' ability to win local fans, began inviting foreign acts in mass.

Unfortunately for the artists, fans have become more discerning, and foreign acts that are do not already have a strong online fan base in China rarely sell. In fact, the scene has chilled to such an extent that new foreign acts draw even fewer listeners than their domestic competitors.

The first waves

Foreign rock artists used to be a mystery to Chinese listeners.

Famous or not, many live music venues became obsessed with bringing them in for gigs as a kind of insurance as far back as 2006.

It was a time when Chinese rock was experiencing a third genesis, following in the footsteps of the giant pioneers of the 1980s and the punk and metal acts of the late 1990s. The era gave birth to popular venues like Kaixin Leyuan, Scream, Wuming Gaodi, MAO Livehouse and Yugongyishan, which were dedicated to providing a stage for the newest sounds.

"It was between 2005 and 2007 that a diverse selection of foreign artists really started coming to China," said Leo de Boisgisson, the French founder of the local 86/33 LINK record label.

There were a variety of causes in play. The local scene was getting its act together, and as local bands explored new sounds, the crowds embraced more genres. Listeners discovered post rock, folk, experimental sounds and electronic beats.

Foreign institutions, such as the French Embassy, the Goethe Institute and the British Council, threw their weight behind popular foreign acts as part of their greater cultural exchange, giving independent promoters like Boisgisson their start. Websites like Douban.com became meeting hubs that transformed the music into a lifestyle choice.

But most significantly, the music labels of the Western world entered a freefall after the recession, pushing many established acts and upstarts abroad to seek a market.

China provided demand.



"It's easy to lose money when you bring over a live act. The more people you have on the road, the more it costs."



The British band Exile Parade had a successful gig in Chengdu with the help of Tony Zhu.

Photo by Xiao Yi

Way to China

Tony Zhu, founder of the promoter Friendship Record, started his business with only one client: Exile Parade, a British band from Warrington.

Zhu found the band on MySpace in 2007 and quickly decided to bring them to China. At the time, he worked for an entertainment company as its project manager

where he learned the ropes of the industry.

"Bringing over an unknown band takes a lot of energy. You need to promote them and create a buzz around the artist. Bringing over a known artist is equally difficult, because they can greedily drive up ticket prices. We are always juggling to try and balance out these two options," said Boisgisson, who started her

work as a promoter in 2005 after some preliminary research into the China scene.

But reputable artists are typically beyond the reach of independent promoters. Young and new bands like Exile Parade charge less before finding fame at home. Zhu started with building groups and mini sites for the band on Douban, tugging on his press contacts to get the band's name into the media.

Last year, the band visited China in May to perform at Zebra Festival in Chengdu. They played another two gigs in Beijing and Shanghai. But the band did so on their own dime, footing the bill for their transnational travel. Zhu picked up the tab within China.

While they were a hit at Zebra Festival, they played to an almost empty house at the other two gigs.

"There used to be a lot of foreign artists who came to China to perform. Usually you would see several bands play on the same day in Beijing as part of a tour. But then the fans quit coming. Ticket sales are all about reputation now, and the frequent visits by foreign acts have diminished their value," Zhu said.

"I usually check Baidu to see if the band has a fanbase in China so I can gauge who might show up. When they have no audience, I look at the band's style – how they look on stage," Boisgisson said.

Cooling down

After spending their own money to tour China, some foreign artists found the trip a waste

of a half-year's savings. Bands from Northern Europe played to disappointing crowds of fewer than 10 people.

The fever is over.

Today, China's top acts are becoming more "international" in both music and style. Some, such as the Queen Sea Big Shark and Carsick Cars, can pack a house better than most foreign groups.

Money is another issue. Promoters trying to bring over a band can rarely hope to break even – even the top festivals do not pay well.

"It's [easy to lose money] when you bring over a live act. The more people you have on the road, the more it costs. Club DJs work in another sphere and don't tend to be as risky, but their success depends heavily on the tastes of the big city clubs. They never venture too far into an artistic program," Boisgisson said.

In such a tough market, the money goes to groups with a name. Even music festivals prefer to invite familiar artists rather than to take a risk on a new act.

Information about a new festival in Pinggu District was recently leaked. The line-up includes Editors, KT Tunstall and Ladytron, some of the biggest names to ever show up at a Chinese music festival. Behind the scenes are Live Nation and its Chinese partner Gehua Entertainment, a company connected to the government.

"Despite all the current problems, the scene will continue to grow locally and internationally. Second- and third-tier cities are going to be the next place to develop and promote new acts. China is still going to be huge," Boisgisson said.

Energy crisis

Nuclear panic and oil demand make China rethink energy security

While the world eagerly watches the Fukushima plant in Japan, oil prices rallied higher on Monday after a Western coalition struck Libya with bombs and missiles. The unrest has made more countries rethink their energy safety, especially China, a country of 1.3 billion with the world's most ambitious nuclear power plans.



The country's oil dependence is a pressing concern.

The Chinese government's recent decision to suspend approval for new nuclear facilities after the Japanese nuclear crisis suggested a Chinese energy policy in crisis, a March 17 editorial in *Financial Times* said.

But the writer believes China is more vulnerable to oil market disruptions emanating from ongoing events in the Middle East.

The country's recent nuclear decision is not likely to change its long-term energy path. The country's oil dependence, however, is a much more pressing concern, it said.

According to the article, China's economy is more oil intensive than either America's or Europe's, with half of its imported oil coming from the Middle East and North Africa, compared with one-quarter for the US.

If crude stays at current prices, China will spend more on oil this year than it earns selling goods to the US, and thus it will add to its already elevated inflation.

Premier Wen Jiabao named inflation the biggest concern this year at recent high-level government meetings. The current consumer price index rises at about 5 percent year-on-year.

The government has the option of stepping in to stop costs reaching the drivers, but even price controls have their limits. During the 2008 oil price spike, refiners found excuses to stop selling petrol and diesel at all, causing widespread energy shortages.

Over the long term, the writer believes that China's best bet is to reduce the oil required to fuel its growth. But planned investments in energy efficiency, electric vehicles and high-speed rail will take time.

The writer suggested the government should make a strategy for stabilizing international supply. Previous attempts have seen China encourage its three largest oil companies take equity stakes in international oil projects. This policy, known as "equity oil," hoped to guard against price volatility and interruptions in supply.

But the attempt had little effect. While companies have profited, neither Chinese citizens nor policymakers have seen much reward.

The writer believes that China can properly weather current prices and keep inflation at bay.

(Agencies)

The third eye Current international situation has little impact on China

By Li Zhixin

Japan's nuclear crisis caused by a magnitude 9.0 earthquake and the Middle East oil crisis won't threaten China's energy security, said Su Hao, an international strategy and security expert at China Foreign Affairs University.

Many countries including Germany, Finland, Switzerland, Venezuela, the UK, India and China, suspended nuclear power plant construction recently or updated their nuclear plan, giving existing nuclear stations a thorough safety examination.

Su said the current suspension won't influence China's nuclear energy security, as nuclear power only occupies 4 percent in China's current power structure while thermal power accounts for more than 80 percent and hydroelectric power, wind power and solar energy account for 12 percent.

Although China's medium- and long-term nuclear power development strategy plans to raise the proportion of nuclear power to 7 percent by 2020, the government will probably slow down its building of new nuclear power plants.

"What's more, Japan's nuclear crisis will also drive

Vietnam, which had decided to develop nuclear energy in cooperation with Japan, to reevaluate its nuclear energy strategy, thus giving China a chance to promote hydraulic power and cooperation among Mekong River nations," Su said.

As for China's oil security, China's oil import mainly depends on Saudi Arabia, Russia, Iran, Angola and Oman, so the Libyan crisis has no direct influence on China's energy strategy and security. "The current increase of crude oil prices is sustainable in China," he said.

Su said both crises will remind Chinese decision-makers to put safety first when it comes to nuclear power plants, and to attach potentially more importance to the development of new energy such as hydroelectric power, wind power, solar photovoltaic power and biomass energy.

China has been playing an active role in energy-saving technology development and application. For example, China is committed to developing electric vehicles and quickening the plan to reform energy-guzzling sectors in order to reduce energy consumption and pollutant emissions during the next five years.

The coproduction conundrum

Expectations were turned on their heads a little at Tuesday's seminar "Europe/China: More Film Coproduction for a New Step of Cooperation" at Hong Kong FilMart.

Moderator Helen Davis Jalayath began the discussion with some familiar – but still striking – statistics. The number of films produced in China grew from 82 in 2000 to 526 in 2010. The number of cinema screens in China has grown to 6,200 but is expected to more than double again to 16,500 by 2015. And box office earnings, which crossed \$1.5 billion in 2010, is forecasted to reach \$5 billion by 2015.

Jalayath described China as a "big market with a narrow door," referring to the quota limits on foreign film releases in a country where local films have a 50 to 60 percent market share. She said that according to recent research by Screen Digest – where she works as a senior analyst – Chinese officials have not made an official response to the World Trade Organization's March 19 deadline to comply with a ruling to further open its domestic market.

Among the panelists was Beijing-based French producer Isabelle Glachant, who has worked with a series of high-profile Chinese directors including Lu Chuan, Lou Ye, Li Yu and Wang Xiaoshuai. Her new film with Wang, *11 Flowers*, is the first official Sino-French film initiated under the coproduction treaty signed last year.

Glachant said that *11 Flowers* had been in development for eight years and was simply at the right time and the right place to benefit from the treaty. While the treaty's main benefit is regarded as permitting French films to bypass China's import quota, for Glachant its primary benefit was to permit a Chinese film to be seen as French in France.

Chow Keung – who co-founded Xstream Pictures with Jia Zhangke and Nelson Yu – also found approximately 30 percent of the budget for his latest production, *Secret Garden*, in Europe.

Chow said he never considers access to the China market as a goal when making a coproduction. Tax issues concerning the different participating countries is a far greater risk to a film's eventual profitability, he said.

Chu Chen-on, an executive producer at October Pictures, said that in China, movies are seen as a short-term investment. He believes that the majority of businessmen who finance movies in China are first-time investors who may leave the industry after making their first film. Without a proper investment system, money will not flow back into the film industry.

However, as the cost of Chinese films rises, financing Chinese films requires more than a single fly-by-night investor. Chu believes that this fact alone is forcing the mainland film business to become more professional and that Hong Kong – with its established financial and legal systems – is perfectly positioned to benefit from such a development.

(Agencies)

Affordable luxury

Gov considers revising tariffs on luxury goods

By Huang Daohen

Whether it's Louis Vuitton, Hermes or Rolls-Royce, most Chinese shoppers dream of owning luxury goods from a world-famous label. But that Gucci Jungle Large Tote handbag that costs 20,600 yuan (\$3,140) at a mainland outlet costs as little as \$980 abroad.

Commerce Minister Chen Deming said this is going to change. The ministry is considering revising its tariffs to make such luxury goods more affordable.

Shopping abroad

If you've been to the duty-free stores of international airports in New York, London or Hong Kong, you might run screaming from the showroom of any luxury brand in downtown Beijing.

Familiar-looking products are often displayed with wholly alien prices.

But the stores that line Wangfujing and Sanlitun Village aren't hurting for business. There is a sucker born every minute, and the nouveau riche from across the country are more than happy to buy their products at three times the value.

But where is the normal shopper to turn when searching for durable products with a good design?

Silk Street is certainly not the answer.

Xiang Tao, a 26-year-old shopaholic, does what millions of other Beijingers do — she books a ticket to Hong Kong. Xiang goes to the island two to three times a month, and on each haul brings back a suitcase full of imported cosmetics and brand-name clothing.

"It's not that I worship luxury products. Our high import tariffs make even the most common foreign products so expensive that they are priced like luxury," she said.

Xiang's favorite French skin care product that costs more than 800 yuan in Beijing costs only 500 yuan in Hong Kong. "If I buy five, the savings can already make up for my air tickets," she said.

The price disparity is seen in other common international brands such as Nike, Adidas and Levi's.

Xiang's trips to Hong Kong are not entirely personal — sometimes she shops on behalf of friends and family. "They seldom buy luxury bags in Beijing and will be very happy to hear someone is going to Hong Kong for the weekend," she said.

On her most recent trip she brought back five Gucci purses for her friends.

Xiang is one of many salaried professionals looking for ways to buy luxury goods while evading the costs of the mainland market.

These new traveling wealthy have not gone unnoticed in the world. Their shopping is bolstering consumption in overseas markets, and luxury brands in London and Paris have launched initiatives directly targeting Chinese consumers who shop abroad.



Most people dream of shopping for luxury goods.

Zheng Shuai/IC Photo

Behind price difference

But how can international brands be so much more expensive in China? Industry insiders say the tariffs are the biggest obstacle.

Linda Sun, a McKinsey consultant, said foreign luxury goods on the Chinese mainland are subject to a 30-percent import tariff and a 17-percent value-added tax.

A Louis Vuitton handbag that costs \$100 in France would cost \$120 in the US, \$125 in Hong Kong and \$140 on the mainland, Sun said.

"It is only natural for people to flock to Paris and London to shop," she said.

The high tariff was addressed at this year's Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference by Wang Jianlin, a representative who appealed for lower taxes.

Wang said that contrary to intent, the tariffs send Chinese consumers to shop abroad rather than decreasing their demand for luxury products and increasing the competitiveness of local equivalents.

According to the National Tourism Bureau, more than 50 percent of luxury purchases by Chinese consumers in 2010 were made overseas.

In 2010, Chinese people took 2 billion domestic trips and spent about 1.1 trillion yuan, or 520 yuan each, the bureau said. By contrast, on their comparatively low 54 million trips abroad, they spent a total of 315 billion

yuan, or 6,000 yuan each.

Wang said the trend was a warning sign that Chinese money is pouring into overseas markets, and told the government that shoppers need to be encouraged to spend at home.

Sun agreed, saying that Chinese metropolises need to develop a shopping culture that will end the need for trips to London, Paris and New York. "Many cities in China are popular among tourists for their scenic value — not for their shopping," she said.

Lowering the luxury tax would be the first step to improving the state of mainland shopping, Sun said.

Policy to cut prices gap

The government has heard the call.

Last week, Commerce Minister Chen Deming told a forum in Beijing that the ministry is working on policies that would make imported products cheaper than the international average.

Chen said the price difference will be tackled by encouraging competition, improving the logistics network and creating new retail models.

The minister also said he would address the price gap for Chinese-made luxury goods. "Many top brand products are made in China. Why are they exported overseas and then resold back? We have to find a way to allow made-in-China luxury goods to be sold directly in China," Chen told Xinhua reporters.

Market watch Global luxury brands change China strategy

International luxury brands are trying to adjust their marketing strategy for the world's second largest market for high-end products.

In 2009, China spent \$23.40 billion (154 billion yuan) on luxury products despite the global financial crisis. Sales increased 23 percent last year, and the country is expected to overtake Japan as the biggest luxury market by 2015.

To make the expansion alive, many top brands are considering moving into smaller cities to tap the emerging market.

McKinsey's Sun said the battleground is moving toward second- and third-tier cities as people get rich. The rapid development of big shopping malls across the nation also helps spread brand recognition, she said.

Sun said top brands are opening more outlets to meet the mass appeal.

There was a debate over where luxury goods should head, but the former attitude that favored exclusivity is eroding, Sun said.

Sun said she once saw Cartier rings advertised on Kaixin001.com, a social networking site. "It's rare for a luxury brand like Cartier to advertise on such a website," she said.

Many traditional luxury brands are changing their business strategies to lure in these emerging consumers, Sun said.

Vancl tries out e-commerce 2.0

By Huang Daohen

Vancl, the country's biggest online garment retailer, announced last Friday it has launched an e-commerce 2.0 campaign to battle a looming Web bubble and increasingly competitive online market.

The campaign, Vancl Star, follows a Web 2.0 business model. Users can register a free star page at star.vancl.com, a social networking community. The site allows users to show off Vancl purchases and new ideas for how to mix and match clothing.

Each photo contains links to sites where users can purchase the featured garments.

Community members are allowed to comment on pictures, and those who have the most comments and fans are promoted to Vancl Star status.

The company said in a statement that it will share profits with its consumers. "If you are a Vancl Star and other consumers click and buy through links in your pictures, you will earn a commission of 10 percent on each sale," the company said.

Vancl Stars can also have the chance to appear in Vancl's ads and receive free coupons.

Chen Nian, the company's founder, said the concept can provide the brand with a vibrant and loyal consumer base. In turn, Chen said the company would share about 1 billion yuan of its profits with Vancl fans.

How this campaign will play out is yet to be known, but industrial experts were conservative about Chen's move.

It is a creative attempt by Vancl to step out of the looming Web bubble, said Zhuang Shuai, a researcher with a local e-commerce research center.

Recent years of optimism surrounding the growth of the Web in China have propped up the country's online sales boom, Zhuang said.

But now that industry is in danger.

Zhang said lower prices and broader choices have attracted consumers to roam shops online, but poor after-sale service, delivery and quality problems have scared off many netizens.

Vancl has to rethink and better compete with other players by putting effort into its new model, Zhuang said.

Chen, however, denied an upcoming market bust. "If you say a bubble is on the way, you sound like a poorly-run company or a venture capitalist who lost out on the chance to get in early," he said.

Chen said the company will consider an IPO late next year. Vancl's sales reached 2 billion yuan in 2010 and are expected to triple this year.

Erin Su, an analyst with research firm iResearch, said the campaign could revolutionize the online clothing selling industry. "It is an exciting idea for a new e-commerce business model," she said. "It would combine e-commerce with fashion for the masses."

Public shaming again



By Li Zhixin

To discourage uncivilized behavior and make the city more livable, the Wuhan Civil Enhancement Office has been exposing those who litter and breach traffic and parking rules through the media since last Saturday.

Forty people between the ages of 20 and 50 were exposed on the first list: their names, gender, age, punishment and work units were publicized.

Some were caught on street surveillance video; others were

turned in by people who took pictures on mobile phones and sent them to a hotline set up by the government.

There actually is a precedent for this type of law enforcement.

Last year, Wuhan police posted the information of several pimps, prostitutes and brothel owners on street corner bulletins.

Local residents supported this most recent campaign. "Shame on them," said Liu Han, a 60-year-old man who believes

immoral behavior tarnishes the city's image. "It's a good move to give them more community pressure by exposing their real names. I think this might prevent others from making the same mistake."

Some citizens even suggested the government should mobilize more people to join a team that exposes uncivilized behavior through microblogs.

Others, however, claim it's not civil for the government to rely on public shaming, and also brought up concerns regarding privacy.



Photos provided by Beijing Youth Daily

Comment

Exposure itself is uncivil

If a city's civility relies on exposing people through public shaming, everyone will constantly feel as if they're being watched. I think uncivilized behavior can be curbed through the promotion of morality and mores through education.

Strengthening urban management also matters. Police should be more understanding in the law enforcement process and leave people some leeway to change. If we want to have civilized cit-

izens, we should have civilized administrators first.

— Li Xin, a public servant

A nice attempt

Privacy can't be a shield for such behaviors.

The government wasn't effective with past policies because the government and police took people's privacy into too much consideration. The past system — the use of small fines — didn't teach perpetrators anything. It failed to educate them and alert the rest

of society. So if bad behaviors aren't exposed to the public, lessons can't be learned, and the same mistakes will happen in the future.

— Wang Haige, university student

It's an invasion of privacy

Such exposure is unlawful, as China has no laws to regulate what behaviors count as "uncivilized." The government should perform its official duties according to law; it is not authorized to prohibit so-called uncivilized behaviors, so the Wuhan government is in

essence violating these people's rights freedom and privacy.

— Pang Hong, lawyer

Another government vanity project

Such exposure won't really shame those who breach public order, and it won't be a deterrent. I think the move is driven by the government's desire to show they are doing something. It's a manifestation of its "achievement anxiety."

— Lin Jingjing, magazine editor

How much would you pay for a housekeeper?

By Liang Meilan

When Chinese people think of auctions, they think about high-priced items like thousand-year-old antiques and real estate lots. Service auctions have yet to be embraced.

But a first-of-its-kind auction happened last Thursday in Sichuan Province: 10 housekeepers — six of whom have college diplomas — had one-year services auctioned off to the public. All of them fetched at least 40,000 yuan.

The auction was conducted by Beijing Jiashide auction company as part of its experiment in auctioning services. Earlier this year, the company auctioned off a female bodyguard's one-year service at the price of 180,000 yuan and a mentor at 600,000 yuan.

All the housekeepers were from the event's co-organizer, Sichuan Chuanmeizi Housekeeping Company, which specializes in providing housekeepers with college degrees. The eight women and two men had diverse academic backgrounds, including English, finance and computer science.

"After research, we realized that the auction was the ideal alternative for the placement of special talents catering to high-end needs. When clients heard we were doing a service auction, there were many inquiries," said Zhao Xiaokai, general



College-aged babysitters being auctioned off in Beijing last week.

Hu Qingming/CFP Photo

general manager of Jiashide.

Shortly after the event, a heated discussion rose in mainstream media and online forums. Supporters applauded the innovative way of placing college housekeepers by maximizing their values. But doubters decried the move as the rich showing off.

"In the context of China's ever-tightening job market, the

move provides a possible solution for giving employees more power," said Chen Jing, a human resource consultant. "It increases their value."

"But it's the market that defines workers' value. An auction alone won't change its pattern."

"Frankly speaking, the auction may appear, on the surface, like a show," said Song Rui, general

manger of Chuanmeizi, the co-organizer. "But our real intent is to raise awareness of competent college housekeepers' value and to offer a possible solution for pairing them with clients."

The event's purpose was obvious, said Li Jia, a housekeeper.

"By being part of the auction, besides testing my ability in the market, was something I saw as

an opportunity to tell university students that housekeeping work is by no means inferior," Li said. "People can have high pay and promising career development. We are equally respected by society."

In some sense, the auction also brought attention to the highly unregulated housekeeping industry.

Yangchen Evening News reported on March 10 that of 200 housekeepers who graduated from a Shenzhen vocational college in 2009, all of them had left the industry by the end of the year. "The root cause lies in the unhealthy labor environment," the report said.

More than 20 million housekeepers are not protected by China's labor law, which jeopardizes three groups: housekeepers themselves, their agencies and the clients.

More young people with solid education backgrounds are choosing to become housekeepers, and human resource offices are encouraging the trend.

"But efforts should be made from all concerned parties, including governments, colleges, agencies and even families. A small auction resulting in small-scale opinionating has little to do with changing the alarming reality," said Ruo Chen, a commenter with *China Youth Daily*.

8 Norwegian patient receives warm welcome from Beijing



Tommy Sulen

Photo provided by Yang Lei

By Chu Meng

Four years ago, Norwegian singer-songwriter Tommy Sulen was dying of cancer. He came to Beijing with the hope that his doctors back home were wrong.

"They told me and my family there were no other options in Scandinavian countries or in Europe to prolong my life," he said.

Diagnosed with glioma, a form of brain cancer, in 2006, Sulen had surgery but relapsed in 2007. He arrived in Beijing in August of that year with his wife and 10-year-old daughter and 14-year-old son.

Driven by the hope that their children could grow up with a father, the Sulen family started a campaign to find alternative cancer treatments worldwide.

In China, he discovered traditional medicine. After four years of treatment at Dongzhimen hospital, he feels stronger than ever.

Last weekend he opened his Beijing home, a three-bedroom apartment near Hepingli in Chaoyang District, to Chinese friends with a musical performance. People walking on the streets downstairs could hear his music.

Sulen was an innovative singer-songwriter and performed with Trond Jensen in Bergen, Norway, as Guttene.

"Music provided me with an outgoing and optimistic spirit," he said. "It opened a window for me to meditate on humanity and the meaning of life. I never felt I was really beaten down by the cancer."

Sulen said he didn't know much about China while growing up,

and even less about its traditional medicine.

"You know, Scandinavians are conservative, and China seemed too far away from us," he said. "But I am the kind of person who loves to experience brand new lifestyles and receive new stuff."

At a recent house party, he showed visitors the draft of a book he has been working on that details the challenges and awkward experiences of his first year in China.

Sulen is far from cured, but he remains optimistic. He is reluctant to talk about his illness – just that he believes in traditional medicine and his doctor friends.

"If I stayed in Norway these last four years, I don't think I'd feel as good as I feel now," he said. "My physical strength is improved and my life is pleasant with my wife and children now here. I think I will continue my treatment here, till God knows when."

Sulen is also immersing himself in the Chinese musical scene. He recently wrote the song "Welcome to My House," inspired by China. And while he doesn't speak Chinese, he had the song translated into Mandarin and taught himself how to sing it with the help of his friends.

Recordings of the song can be found in English and Chinese at Your Favorite Music Studio in Norway, a store featuring selections from Norway's best musicians.

Sulen catered to his Chinese friends during his party. As he pointed out, it wouldn't have made sense to introduce a song called "Welcome to My House" anywhere else.

Between introspection and discovery

By Chu Meng

Omar Galliani, a 57-year-old Italian, is a sketch artist. He draws. As art constantly tries to reinvent itself, Galliani has stuck with the basic, though the medium belies the complexity of his works.

In the last decade, he has shifted his focus from Italy to Beijing. He has dabbled with Chinese painting techniques and tried incorporating them with his sketching, an art brought to the world by Italian Renaissance artists.

Galliani's solo exhibition, *Chinese Diary*, opened at the Italian embassy's Cultural Center on Wednesday.

The exhibition features many drawings of diverse sizes and were all inspired by the female world.

Galliani's sketches are done

with pencils, charcoal or crayons on *xuan* paper, a surface normally reserved for calligraphy and wash painting.

"It's evidence that I was influenced by the Chinese sense of beauty and Oriental painting culture," he said. "I believe I was born with an affection for *xuan* paper, though I didn't know it. I love its plain texture and natural color so much. It provides my sketches with a unique feeling that no other paper can provide."

A red dragon is stamped onto each drawing. The red, rarely seen in sketches, makes a bold impression on viewers.

"People around the world know that dragons were royal and auspicious symbols in ancient China," Galliani said. "But it was also a dominant pattern in ancient Italian alchemy. I love this stamp for it repre-



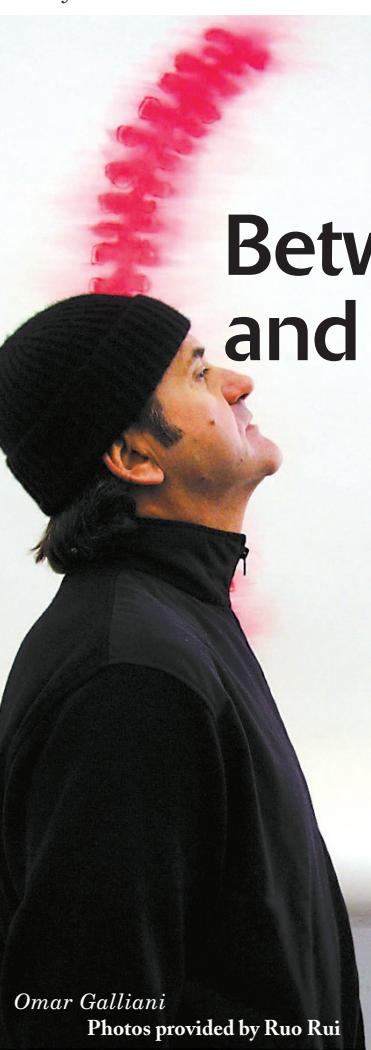
A charcoal drawing from Galliani's Oriental Sketch series.

sents my understanding of cultural fusion."

Galliani said his favorite work is "To See the Colors," a crayon drawing. It consists of three small-scale drawing boards. Female portraits from the left to the right are drawn lightly with green, blue and red crayons.

"The colors were inspired by Hangzhou silk," he said. "The sketches are faithful to light theory."

The three women face the colored boards and have been caught in the exact moment when color invades their minds. They seem lost in contemplation.



Omar Galliani

Photos provided by Ruo Rui

Beijing to go dark for Earth Hour

By Han Manman

If you believe protecting the planet is important, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) would like you to turn off your lights at 8:30 pm on March 26.

The annual Earth Hour has become the world's largest voluntary action. According to WWF China, this year's Earth Hour is asking people to go beyond the hour, and use Earth Hour to commit to an action, big or small, that will help the planet's sustainability.

"The central theme of Earth Hour is no longer restricted to climate change, but overall environmental sustainability," said Jim Gradoville, CEO of WWF China. "So in addition to the customary practice of turning off lights for one hour, this year individuals, businesses and governments are also asked to make one change for the planet."

Gradoville described the change as the response of a global community seeking to do more for the earth.

"Turning off your lights for Earth Hour is valuable. It's a sign to others that you believe protecting the planet is important, so they will more likely feel it's important too. But around the



Many Chinese children pledged to turn off their lights during Earth Hour.

CFP Photo

world and in China, people have been asking if they can do more than turning off their lights and if they can take some personal action in their daily lives for the planet," he said.

Gradoville said among the thousands of cities taking part

in Earth Hour this year, many have already committed to taking action beyond the hour. Sydney is in the process of switching its park and street lights to LED lights. Medellin, Colombia has committed to long-term water protection and

tree-planting, while the city of Shenyang in northeast China has plans to reforest 38,000 hectares of land.

The event is attracting many individual participants as well.

"I will definitely turn off the light this Saturday, and I plan

to persuade more of my friends to join," said Yu Jie, a local citizen. "Through my efforts, I hope the people around me can understand that we've entered an era of low-carbon economy."

According to WWF China, Earth Hour 2011 will set a record for participation, with 131 countries and regions registered to take part.

On Saturday at 8:30 pm, iconic landmarks across the globe will go dark for Earth Hour. Starting with the Sky Tower in Auckland, New Zealand and moving to the Sydney Opera House in Australia, the lights-out campaign will then sweep across Asia and the Middle East.

Major landmarks in Beijing such as the Forbidden City, Bird's Nest and National Grand Theater, together with the Queen's Palace in Madagascar, Table Mountain in South Africa, Berlin's Brandenburg Gate, the Eiffel Tower in Paris and the London Eye, will switch off their lights.

Earth Hour, initiated by WWF in 2007, calls on families and buildings to turn off their lights for one hour on the last Saturday night of March. This will be the third year that China has participated.

Ceremony held to commemorate China-Kuwait relationship

By Zhao Hongyi

Faisal Al-Ghais, Kuwaiti ambassador, joined Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Li Jinzhang on Tuesday in a ceremony to commemorate 40 years of diplomatic ties between the two countries.

"I still remember my first visit to your country in 1961, five decades ago," Al-Ghais said.

The two countries established ties on March 22, 1971.

The ambassador promised that his country will continue to stress the "One China" policy as the fundamental base of the relationship. He also thanked China for supporting the independence and sovereignty of Kuwait.

Li, on behalf of the Chinese government, presented an envelope designed specifically for the occasion.

The two cut a huge birthday

cake in a symbolic gesture that two countries with different cultures and history can still cooperate closely.

Nearly all the ambassadors of Arabian countries, about 20, attended the ceremony, which was held in the Kuwaiti embassy.

Bilateral relations are closer in the economic and business sectors for the two countries, Al-Ghais said.

Construction for an integrated, large-scale Kuwait-China oil refinery project, valued at \$9 billion (59 billion yuan), will begin this year. The project is jointly invested by Kuwait Petroleum Corporation and SINOPEC.

When the project is complete in four years, the oil refinery will be able to produce 15 million tons of oil per year, with annual ethylene production at 1

million tons per year.

Kuwait has invested \$11 billion in an oil refinery in Guangdong Province and increased its investment in the Agricultural Bank of China from \$800 million to \$1.9 billion last year.

"All these investments show our optimism and confidence in China's market," the ambassador said.

Al-Ghais also stressed that private capital from his country can also play a heavy role in the real estate, energy, transportation, agriculture, tourism and service industries in China.

The ambassador also welcomes Chinese companies to continue their work in Kuwait.

Kuwait has a total of \$130 billion worth of investment in infrastructure and hardware construction, of which \$80



The ambassador and vice minister cut a cake to commemorate 40 years of diplomatic ties.

Photo by Ma Sa

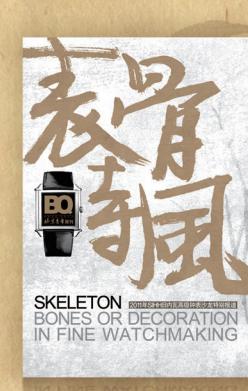
tals and schools.

"We welcome Chinese companies to bid for these business opportunities," the ambassador said.



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Inaugural chamber music festival delights fans

By Zhang Dongya

A 1st International Chamber Music Festival was held at Yishu 8 last weekend. E-mex, one of Europe's top chamber music groups, and American composer Bruce Gremo offered audiences three days of concerts and workshops.

Before the opening concert, E-mex pianist Martin von der Heydt said the music would be a fusion of contemporary sounds and traditional Western music.

"We try to provide some background to the music we play to help audiences understand the music," Heydt said.

E-mex, founded by six young musicians from Cologne and the Ruhr area in Germany in 1999, has earned a sterling reputation within the contemporary music scene. The group plays classical pieces from German composers such as J.S. Bach and Robert Schumann along with more modern compositions from the likes of Helmut Lachenmann to show how music is linked through the generations.

"Sometimes when we hear something for the first time, we may find it strange, and even start refusing what we hear," said Christine Cayol, curator of Yishu 8 Gallery. "For us at Yishu 8, the most important thing is to share different views about art and music."



Yishu 8's first international chamber music festival

Photo provided by Yishu 8

Cayol said she encourages audience members to ask questions at the end of shows and learn more about the links between classical and modern music.

E-mex often performs contemporary works with interesting young composers.

"We are interested in composers of our time who are writing modern pieces because we can talk about our life, learn how to think and how to compose," Heydt said. "It's important that the composers, while not famous,

have strong personalities."

Heydt said his group has contacted many young composers in China and plans to collaborate with them in Germany later this year.

"The concert is just a beginning, and we really like to continue," Heydt said. Four of the six members in the ensemble came to Beijing for the concert. They will head to South Korea for another festival in the near future.

On Sunday, the group offered a concert using both Western and Asian instruments.

Wu Na played the guqin, and Gremo played the shakuhachi, an end-blown Japanese flute with history rooted in China.

"It was a wonderful experience to listen to music in a gallery surrounded by art work," said Lu Yanpeng, a young artist. "The place offers a unique intimacy that brings art and music together."

The event was sponsored by the German and French organizations and the Federal Foreign Office, Goethe Institute, Altran and Arthur D Little.

World-famous club DJ visits Beijing

By Liang Meilan

Space in Ibiza, Spain, multiple-time winner of "Best Club in the World," is presenting a world tour with its renowned resident DJs. Club-goers in China will get the opportunity to party with Italian DJ Remo, 31, at LAN Club on Saturday.

The music will be festive tech-house style, which Remo specializes in.

"Considering Remo is very well-known for mixing classic and electronic music as well as other styles and for forming unique sounds that suit many Chinese and foreign club-goers, we decided to invite him to town," said Steven Huang, deputy general manager of LAN Club.

Self-defined as a bridge between house music and techno, melodic and sometimes dark music, Remo spent years DJing the best Italian parties before moving to Ibiza.

Remo has classical piano training and owns the label Lilith. His sounds reflect his belief in what music should be: a variety of sounds existing in harmony.

Remo has been a big name among Chinese club-goers for many

years, though he has yet to DJ in China. Four hundred of his fans reserved seats for LAN shortly after news of his release was publicized.

"I'm super excited to see Remo," said Li Jun, a local DJ. "His music influences many Chinese DJs by encouraging them to boldly mix classical music with electric sounds. I hope he will bring his most famous pieces like Ivision and Unfading Beauty."

Six dancers from Foc i Fum, a performance group that also works at Space, will perform carnival-style dances to tech-style house music. The 29-year-old group concentrates on interactive dance and has performed all around the world.

UK DJ Marek Dylan, a familiar face in Beijing's lighthearted scene, will get things started.

Space's following stops will be Shanghai on April 2 and Hong Kong on April 8.

Space Ibiza tour – Beijing stop

Where: LAN Club, 4/F Twin Tower, B12 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: March 26, starts 9 pm

Tel: 5109 6012

Cost: 150 yuan, buy two, get one free

Italian DJ Remo

Photo provided by LAN CLUB

Event

Japan Earthquake and Tsunami Charity

The March 11 earthquake and tsunami have devastated Japan. To support the victims, Belgium's ambassador to China and his wife – who experienced the Kobe earthquake in 1995 – are organizing a charity with all proceeds going to Red Cross Japan. An origami class will be offered. Traditional Japanese foods such as sushi will be served, and Japanese traditional dance will be performed.

Where: Belgian Embassy, 6 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

When: March 26, 10 am – 4 pm

Cost: 200 yuan

Talk on the mobile software economy

The rapid development of mobile technology has given rise to an international boom in mobile software, creating huge opportunities for digital workers and innovative entrepreneurs. The British Council and Modern Media have teamed up with Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA) to invite two app pioneers from the UK to share their stories and observations on the development of the application industry in China.

Where: UCCA auditorium, 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: March 26, 1:30-3:30 pm

Tel: 6438 6675

Cost: Free

Workshop for expat kids and family

"Slurping Soup" is a series of books aimed at expat children. To celebrate the release of its newest book, Slurping Soup's Beijing-based authors and beijingkids Club are organizing a session for children ages 4 to 11 and their families.

Where: Alio Olio restaurant, west gate of Chaoyang Park, Chaoyang Gongyuan Nan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: March 26, 10 am – 1 pm

Tel: 5820 5407

Cost: 200 yuan for one parent and one child; 150 yuan for one parent and one child for beijingkids Club members

Meeting for those interested in community theater

Beijing Playhouse is preparing four shows over the next two years. It is in need of actors and volunteers to fill positions like musical director, choreographer, translator and more. This crew meeting is open to everyone interested in community theater, with or without acting experience.

Where: 22 International Art Plaza, 32 Baizhan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: March 27, 2 pm

Email:

performance@beijingplayhouse.com

Cost: Free

(By Liang Meilan)

Dakar Rally returns to Beijing



The run on the Great Wall attracts thousands of participants every year.

By Zhao Hongyi

Registration for the annual North Face 100 series is now open. Runners and athletes will have the chance to compete in three races – the 10-kilometer, 50-kilometer and 100-kilometer – on May 7 in Changping District.

As always, the competition will start in Juyongguan Great Wall and end at the Ming Tomb Reservoir.

The courses are a mixture of paved roads, rocky and hilly

paths, tracks and trails. The competition is also known as the Dakar Rally.

The competition has a long history in the US and Europe. Three years ago, the event came to Asia and is now held in six countries: China, Australia, Japan, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

The organizer has invited Kaburaki Tsuyoshi, an internationally renowned endurance runner and two-time champion of the North Face 100 China's

100-kilometer race, to teach at a camp in Beijing from mid-March to May. The camp is open to the public.

Other participants include professional runners Xiaoqiang Zeng from Hong Kong and Xing Ruling, Yun Yanqiao, Zhang Huiyi and Bai Bing from the Chinese mainland.

The competitions are scheduled to begin at 4:30 am to give more participants the chance to take part. About 5,000 people

Photo provided by The North Face

participated last year, and organizers are expecting participation to reach 6,600 this year.

For the sake of safety and security, organizers will limit the number of participants in the 100-kilometer and 50-kilometer races at 200 and 400 people.

All registration fees are refundable. Applicants in the 50-kilometer race can register in groups.

Visit thenorthface100.com.cn or call the organizing committee at 8569 9751 for more information.

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to:
weiyi@ynet.com

I want to import a used car from South Korea and plan on using the Tianjin port. Is it possible to do this? What are the customs requirements and procedures?

Though importing a personal vehicle into China can be tricky, there are still several local companies that assist in bringing vehicles in from abroad. One worth trying is Philip Clarke Consulting. It is a foreign-owned consultancy, so communication won't be a problem. Requirements are simple if your car is less than a year old and you have residency status and foreign expert status in China. Visit philipclarkeconsulting.com for more information.

Where can I find a coffeemaker that brews large pots?

You can find big coffee-makers at Metro Cash and Carry (1 Xinjian Gongmen Lu, Haidian District, tel: 6286 9888; or 35 Dayangfang Lu, Chaoyang District, tel: 8738 6888). Also try Taobao.com. Another option is to ask someone from your favorite cafe for recommendations.

(By Liang Meilan)

The art of shifting sands

By Chu Meng

The most bothersome thing about spring in Beijing is the sandstorms. Grains of sand float in the air, veiling the sun and sky.

But for Gao Zanmin, a Beijing animator, sand is a source of art.

Known as the father of Chinese sand animation, Gao holds exhibitions around the country to show off his work. Using a projector and light board, he renders images in sand with his hands and creates startling patterns that seize the imagination.

Everything is ephemeral. An image is recognizable only for a short about of time before Gao uses his hands to create something new.

Gao's sand animation studio, opened last month, is the first of its kind in town.

He said the popularity of sand art has grown substantially in China since 2008. He has been invited to create TV commercials for multinational brands and shows for government organizations, and to perform on TV and at festival galas.

Gao's start in sand art began in 2004, when he watched a 17-minute sand animation show called *Genesis on Seoul International Cartoon and Animation Festival* by Hungarian artist Ferenc Cakó, who founded sand animation in the 1980s.

Gao said his fascination with the piece is still very apparent. He recalls there were two goats' faces that morphed into a gorilla's head, then a lion's head – all accompa-



Gao Zanmin's sand animation

nied by music.

"My soul was totally touched by such fleeting visual magic," Gao said. "Cakó's live show was creative, intelligent and thought-provoking."

At that time, Gao was a 20-year veteran of news illustrations in major print and online media. He was a theater design major who graduated from the China Central Academy of Drama in 1996.

But after watching Cakó, "I suddenly realized that this form of art is more powerful and meaningful than news illustrations," he said. "It touches people's hearts directly."

Gao immediately began to teach himself the art. He developed his skills by creating short shows with a social focus. He gained nationwide fame for his work Olympic Flame Unites the World in 2008.

"At that time, there were some unpleasant voices from France and the US, disturbing our Olympic torch relays," he said. "I just wanted to build a medium for people to express their feelings and to strike a chord of unification among domestic and overseas Chinese."

The video racked up more than a million hits online within a few days.

Gao has a training studio, where he teaches four levels of classes for sand animation. All ages are welcome.

Zanmin Sand Animation Training Studio

Where: Room 16C, Building 2, Yujingyuan residential area, east of Capital Library, Dong Sanhuan Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 9 am – 9 pm, Monday – Sunday, RSVP
Tel: 8736 3540

Government starts public service procurement

By Zhao Hongyi

The municipal government released a list of more than 300 public services it needs help with this year, including unemployment training, public services for migrant workers and workers in retirees' canteens.

Social entities, NGOs and individuals are encouraged to bid for the items. Bid winners will be provided funds and expected to provide the best service they can.

The government said it spent 200 million yuan last year to provide this service and it would spend more in 2011.

The top concerns are community services for elders and the disabled and teachers in remote areas.

The procurements are paid in three ways: full payment, part payment and reward, according to the services purchased and market supply.

The government used to provide these services, but it is downsizing its number of public servants, leaving these services to the private sector.

It began purchasing services last year.

"These service procurements provide a platform for individuals, especially the middle-aged, to start their own business,"

said Song Guilun, director of social affairs under the municipal government.

For instance, at Yuxin Garden, a residential community in northwest Beijing many retired professors and teachers live by themselves. They need a public cafeteria to prepare meals.

Last year, a community canteen was created where elders over 60 could eat for less than 10 yuan a day.

In addition, the civil welfare administration of Haidian District provides a 100 yuan coupon to each elder and disabled every month.

The public services procured this year are divided into five categories: community services to elders and kids; community and village management services like security and unemployment training; social public services like volunteering in remote areas; social public services in communities like clinics and kindergartens; and social management policies, information and international exchanges.

Interested individuals and organizations can visit bjshjs.gov.cn for more details and download bid applications.

The deadline for submitting bids is April 6. Results will be announced at the end of April.



Creating a new theater

A producer's stand against

By He Jianwei

The emerging theaters and live houses of recent years do not reflect the quality of their creations and their potential to draw audiences.

Money talks in Chinese theater culture, as the nation opens further as a market economy, and super stars acting out kitsch plots is what drives up attendance rates.

But artists are idealists, and the quality of their creations is their only lifeline as they struggle at small theaters and live houses.

Since 2009, a theater showcase has been gathering the top performances of the year each spring to help the top plays and most qualified performers to find new fans.

This year, the showcase is presenting five programs, including a drama, a dance and a concert.

Unlike other theater producers, Cui Wenqin, one of the founders of New Culture Showcase, is quiet and shy.

He has worked in the culture industry for several years, investing in and producing performances to make money. But he soon tired of the market-centered business and decided to explore the art side of theater culture.

In 2008, he set up Studio U to inspire creative, young dramatics. "Our target is to produce three plays each year, one of which may become part of our studio repertoire," Cui said.

His crew quickly produced *Leave Before Getting Old*, based on the true story of a friend who left urban life for a rural village at the foot of Meili snow mountain in Yunnan Province. When he planned to return to the city, a car accident ensured he would remain in the village forever.

The play was first staged at the 2008 Beijing Fringe Festival and became the event's top seller. He hoped the play could become part of the hosting studio's repertoire, but its managers had no interest in putting it on their long-term schedule.

He soon found that every private theater shared this caution.

"Money is a source of pressure for us. The rent for one small theater that can seat a hundred people costs about 20,000 to 30,000 yuan for one night. All we expect is a high rate of attendance," he said.

He and director Shao Zehui decided to organize a regular showcase, including their repertoire and performances in various art forms by other studios. The only requirement was that new programs must not be overtly commercial.

"We gave up the marketing path that most theaters and festivals follow. We hope to attract minority audiences with our performances – the kinds that come to festivals. I'm sure people who love one of our programs will come and see more," he said.

The first showcase opened at Peking University in spring 2009 – the 90th anniversary of the May Fourth New Culture Movement. It was aptly named "New Culture Showcase."

Cui and Shao are alumni of Peking University, a former base of the New Culture Movement. "We have inherited a tradition from the first president of our university, Cai Yuanpei. Each person is allowed to have a voice in Peking University and to think freely. That kind of thinking is why Peking University was the origin and center of the New Culture Movement," Cui said.

Cui majored in Russian between 2001 and 2005, during which time he was a member of the drama club.

Most clubs carry on the spirit of idealism and romanticism from the 1980s and 1990s. But with the Internet a distraction and mounting employment pressures, club membership has been tumbling.

"At the beginning of each semester, we enrolled 100 to 200 new members, but at the end of each semester, we were down to 30," he said. "Although the clubs are not as active as before, the audience still exists."

The first showcase drew many students and teachers from the universities. Because it was performed in the university's hall, the ticket price was less than 100 yuan – much cheaper than in private theaters.

Two years later, the showcase became a new brand for introducing young and creative performances. "We have a fixed audience – one third are college students and teachers, one third are office workers who love theater and one third are fans of the performers," he said.

In the years since, Cui has taken his showcase off campus and into the private theaters while maintaining his low-cost ticket price of 100 yuan. The cheapest seats cost only 20 yuan.

"The ticket price is too high in the Chinese market. In many European countries, people pay only €10 (93 yuan) to see a play. Here, our tickets cost hundreds of thousands of yuan," he said.

But for all his support of theater, Cui eyes the current boom with caution.

"We are definitely in a bubble. A shortage of talents will cause the market to cave in. Most of the new groups don't know how to build a brand in the theater market," he said. "The best example to the contrary is director Meng Jinghui. Meng knows how to make a strong brand. He presents quality performances year after year, and that's why his Fengchao Theater is so influential."

Cui also hopes to create his own new brand in the current theater culture. "We're offering something different. Something that isn't noisy, fickle or kitsch. We don't care how many programs we select each year, but we care about their quality. It will take another two or three years to get more people to realize that a trip to the theater is worth their time," he said.



21 Steps, by Beijing Modern Dance Company

Photos provided by Studio U



Leave Before Getting Old, by Studio U



Cui Wenqin

ter st commercialization



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Programs

21 Steps

Presented by Beijing Modern Dance Company

Where: Multi-purpose Room, 2/F Peking University Hall, 5 Yiheyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: March 31 – April 1, 7 pm

Admission: 40, 50 yuan

Tel: 6275 8452

Leave Before Getting Old

Presented by Studio U

Where: Multi-purpose Room, 2/F Peking University Hall, 5 Yiheyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: April 3-5, 7 pm

Admission: 40, 50 yuan

Tel: 6275 8452

The Land Is My Study

Presented by Trees Music & Art

Where: Multi-purpose Room, 2/F Peking University Hall, 5 Yiheyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: April 16, 2 pm

Admission: 40, 50, 80 yuan

Tel: 6275 8452

Where: Mako Livehouse, 36 Guangqu Lu, Chaoyang District

When: April 17, 8 pm

Admission: 80 yuan

Tel: 5205 1112

The Golden Cangue

Presented by Perry Chiu Experimental Theater

Where: Peking University Hall, 5 Yiheyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: April 11-12, 7:30 pm

Admission: 20, 40, 60, 80, 120, 180 yuan, 220 yuan for VIP

Tel: 6275 8452

Songs from the Emerald Isle

Presented by Black Water

Where: National Library Concert Hall, 33 Zhongguancun Nan Dajie, Haidian District

When: April 9, 7:30 pm

Admission: 80, 120, 180,

280, 380 yuan

Tel: 6848 5462, 8854 5520



Life is what you make it

By Li Zhixin

At the mention of Buffett, most people start thinking of billionaire Warren Buffett and his great success in the stock market.

But have his investments in parenting been as successful as his picks? Peter Buffett, his youngest son, may be the most qualified person to answer this question.

Last Monday, Peter Buffett shared his experiences in finding his own path and becoming an achiever with Chinese readers at UCCA during the launch of the Chinese version of his inspirational book, *Life Is What You Make It: Find Your Own Path to Fulfillment*.

Instead of assuming his father's throne on Wall Street, Peter Buffett, an Emmy Award-winning musician, found himself sucked into the music world. He said he has worked for what he has attained; writing music for free before landing gigs doing the audio logos of MTV, Coca-Cola and composing "Fire Dance" for the movie *Dances with Wolves*.

"The only real inheritance that I received from my father was his philosophy: forge your own path in life. It is a creed that has allowed him to follow his own passions, establish his own identity and reap his own successes," Buffett said.

If the next generation of rich does not appreciate how its wealth came about, it will be a tragedy for society, he said. "If they only care about external happiness like fancy cars, luxuri-

ous villas and inheriting vast fortunes, they won't understand the real value of life and won't lead a meaningful one," he said.

His book contains rich anecdotes drawing on his own experiences and the examples of people who exemplify his values. Some topics he touches on are how being born into wealth should not grant a sense of entitlement; that one's vocation is rarely a straight path, the need for perseverance, the search for personal happiness and lessons he learned from his father.

"One's starting point of life is less important than how he or she finally arrives and realizes his or her dream," he said.

Buffett's message is as compelling as it is simple: choose a career in something you're passionate about and work hard to succeed.

"Don't go into a field just to make money. Give your children unconditional love but teach them to support themselves. Give back to society with your time and money and you will find yourself even more fulfilled," he said. "It is what we are able to give back to society that shapes and defines us as individuals."

Still, with all the enthusiastic recommendations quoted from Bill Clinton, Bill Gates, Ted Turner, Gloria Steinem, Bono and Kaifu Lee printed on the book jacket, it's hard to forget the advantage that Warren Buffett's son has struggled so hard to distance himself from.

Life Is What You Make It: Find Your Own Path to Fulfillment

By Peter Buffett, 214pp, New World Press, 28 yuan

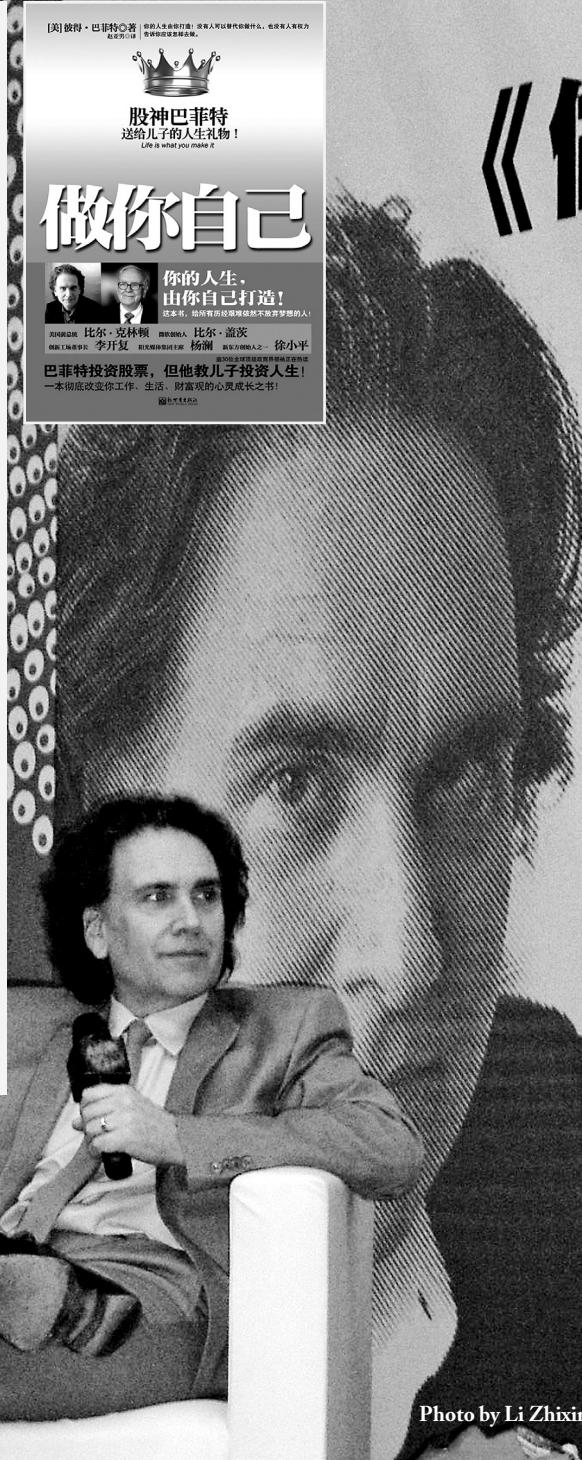
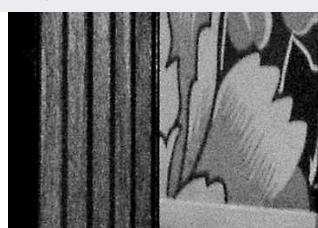


Photo by Li Zhixin

Seeking the cause of history

By He Jianwei

History may be written by victors, but French writer Gerard Guegan is unwilling to be their tool.

His latest book, *Fontenoy Will Never Return*, is the story of a French journalist, writer and politician Jean Fontenoy who has been forgotten by his countrymen.

Fontenoy was notorious for his fascist background. In the 1920s and 1930s, he covered Russia and China for the Havas news agency.

He discovered communism in his early 20s, and after returning to France joined the French Communist Party. But soon after, he would switch to the French Popular Party, a fascist political group.

It was a mystery for Guegan. As early as 1933, Fontenoy had denounced the Nazis, yet he was

left to commit suicide in Berlin when the Soviet Union's army sacked the city in 1945.

Guegan was fascinated with Fontenoy's experience and obsessed with the question of what drives a man to change camps from the most extreme of left-wing politics to the most right-wing.

"I have often wondered why so many energetic figures so swiftly change during their youth. Normally we see ourselves as living in a world where everyone swears eternal faithfulness to their convictions," Guegan said last week during his visit to Beijing, Hangzhou and Shanghai. "The only reason I wrote *Fontenoy will Never Return* was to understand what we are made of and what determines our destinies."

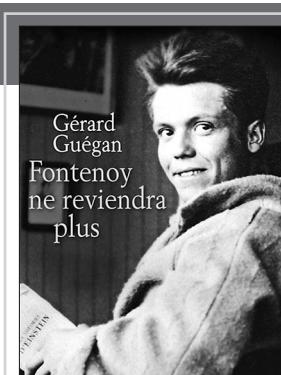
In Guegan's eyes, everyone is a mixture of truth and lies,

bravery and weakness. "As a writer, one hopes his or her reader can understand him or her as a whole and does not shy away from our negative parts," he said.

Despite having written several books about history, Guegan makes a clear distinction between himself and historians.

"Many historians claim that they are objective and fair, but they often accept the victor's view intentionally or by chance. So most writers reference only the historical data confirmed by authorities," he said. "I do believe there is no truth in history – we can only look at what may have happened."

This book is neither factual nor biographical, but it follows its lead figure – his commitments and loves, and his obsessions and disguises – to his ultimate tragic fate.



About the author

Gerard Guegan is a writer, journalist, editor and translator and has published 30 books, including novels and works about film, as well as several political essays and the song Mao Mao for Jean-Luc Godard's *La Chinoise*.

He is known for founding the review *Subjectif* and translating Charles Bukowski. At one time he was an actor and director, directing five films.

Timezone 8 book listing

Timezone 8 is a Hong Kong-based publisher, distributor and retailer of books on contemporary art, architecture, photography and design. This week, it recommends three new titles to *Beijing Today* readers.



Re-Imagining the Real

Edited by Wu Hung, 224pp, Timezone 8, \$40

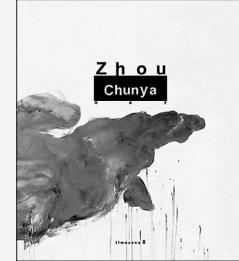
Photos by Gao Lei, Shi Guorui, Yang Fudong and Zhuang Hui mix the idioms and the formality of documentary photography with a subtly foregrounded subjectivity. Their work represents an exciting new strain in contemporary photography. This book assesses their photographic vocabularies as expressions of a new stance on contemporary China.



Zhou Chunya

By Zhou Chunya and Hong Lei, 567pp, Timezone 8, \$60

This massive retrospective catalogue is the definitive work of the contemporary painter Zhou Chunya, including his best-known Green Dog series – comical portraits of his beloved German shepherd – as well as expressionistic landscapes and still life, Schiele-esque nudes and his most recent works, in which couples embrace in fecund landscapes.



Yu Hong: Golden Sky

Edited by Ullens Center for Contemporary Art and ISreading Culture, 128pp, Shanghai People's Press, \$23

In her new series *Golden Sky*, acclaimed painter Yu Hong reanimates history by combining classical and religious composition with scenes from modern, secular life. Inspired by the Buddhist cave paintings of Dunhuang and Kizil, classical European art and her own extensive reading, the artist populates her large canvases with vivid, life-sized figures that are as familiar to us as we are to them.

(By He Jianwei)

Specialty shop offers balloons as alternative to flowers

By Wang Yu

Most people like balloons as much for their colors as for their connection with joy and happiness. But attractive balloons have always been hard to come by in Beijing.

It was this limited assortment at local toy stores that inspired Hu Xinying, owner of Balloon Queen, to start her business. Her store offers interesting balloons from all over the world, which she hopes can introduce something special and new to the city's celebrators.

Balloon Queen's showroom is an eye catcher.

The main floor space is filled with balloons of all shapes and sizes. The green walls adorned with cartoon paintings lead a path to the rear where owner Hu Xinying keeps her desk and helium tanks.

"I think girls love balloons and I'm no exception. However it used to be very hard to find balloons like we saw in the movies. All we had were plain-colored balloons manufactured to low standards. That was why I started this shop," Hu says.

Last summer, Hu left her job at a foreign-owned investment bank to start Balloon Queen at Jianwai SOHO. She began with a 500,000-yuan investment, four employees and a product line imported from Europe, Japan and the Americas.

After opening the shop, Hu spent a few months learning the trade and how it could be adapted to the tastes of Chinese buyers. She reg-

istered a culture company that offered balloon decoration services before opening the store. Though balloons are finding new use at weddings, opening ceremonies and birthday parties, they are still toys to most.

"Balloons definitely play a big part in foreign cultures. There are several big brands such as Anagram that produce wonderful balloons. Louis Vuitton used its products to decorate its showcases, and Chelsea Clinton bought Anagram balloons for her wedding. Unlike our domestic products, imported balloons often have exquisite patterns and can hold air for up to three weeks," Hu says.

Most balloons are categorized by their material: latex, plastic or aluminum foil. Balloon Queen uses helium to fill its balloons rather than the less safe hydrogen. Balloons that go flat can be refilled at the shop.

Besides selling balloons, the store also provides event organizing and delivery services. Balloon Queen creates custom balloon decoration plans for the clients for each event. To date, it has organized balloon arrangements for more than 60 clients at an average of 1,000 yuan for each party. Balloon delivery is also available as a gift.

"Sending balloons and flowers to your lover can be really

romantic. According to our feedback, many clients see balloon art as a new lifestyle choice," Hu says.

Balloon Queen's name has spread fast thanks to microblog mentions. Last week, the shop supplied a balloon magic show and Hu had to work at the venue till the end. Balloon Queen also made decoration plans for the birthday party of popular TV host Li Jing's daughter.

"All the kids were so happy when playing with the balloons. It takes me a long time to prepare for these events, but it's worth it when I get to see their smiling faces," Hu says.

If Balloon Queen continues to do well, Hu plans to open new branches in local shopping malls. The balloon delivery service remains a largely untapped market that Hu says offers as many options for showing emotions as flowers.

For Hu, her dream has just started to come true.



Hu Xinying is surrounded by her balloons at work.
Photo by Yang Yidong

Finding the right balloon

Birthday parties

Choosing balloons for a birthday party is easy because there are plenty of balloons with phrases like "happy birthday" printed on them.

"Usually we advise clients to pick foil balloons, because these have more colors and shapes. However, there also a lot of good latex options that are adorned with colorful ribbons. The balloons are filled with helium and stay on the ceiling," Hu says.

Regular parties

Choices are flexible at common par-

ties, and which balloon to pick depends on the theme and the tastes of the guests. Foil balloons are still the most popular, but balloons shaped like animals, foods or musical instruments can also be a fun option.

Weddings

"I suggest having latex balloons tied on the tables. If you control how high up the balloons can get, it's possible to make the room look bigger. They're also cheaper than flowers, which is something guests are too used to seeing at these celebrations," Hu says.

Balloon knowledge

1. Balloons used for sculpture and balloon arts are made of an extra-stretchy rubber. The material makes sure that they can be twisted and tied without bursting.

2. Dutch artist Menno Baars was the first contemporary artist who used balloons in art. It took Baars five days to paint a large primitive female nude on a huge balloon screen in his violent colors and broad brush strokes. The piece was titled "The Independent Woman."

3. In the UK, foil balloons sold at major theme parks and zoos have weights attached. These help prevent their accidental release into the environment.

4. Modern foil balloons were first introduced in the 1970s with thin, unstretchable, metallized plastic films.

5. Most professional balloon party decorators use electronic equipment to set the exact amount of helium to fill the balloon. Air inflators are used for non-floating balloons.

Balloon Queen

Where: Room 9309, Jianwai SOHO Tower, Chaoyang District
Open: 10:30 am - 6 pm
Tel: 5711 9216

South American food and wine

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Food

By Annie Wei

Imported wines are popular in China, but consumers are growing tired of the usual stock from Old World wine regions like Bordeaux, France.

On the other hand, Argentina, as one of the top five wine producing countries, is seeing its wines gain popularity.

This week, *Beijing Today* tried three new Argentinean wines – plus a chili recipe that uses wine – and two South American restaurants.

Three recommendations from Rutini Wines

Rutini, established in 1885, is one of the oldest wineries in Argentina. It owns vineyards in five areas of Mendoza. The diverse sites allow for multiple grape varieties. This region's high altitude, cool air and intense sunshine produce grapes with rich fruit characters, intense color and smoothness.

Rutini Wines imports about 45,000 cases to China every year. Most are middle- and high-end wines that are affordable, said Sol Asensio, Rutini's communications manager.

Rutini Cabernet-Malbec, 380 yuan

Part of Rutini's basic series, this Malbec has a fresh fruit aroma and tastes strong and full-bodied. Normally, most wines have to have a 14.5 percent alcohol level to achieve for such a strong flavor. Rutini keeps it at 13.5 percent.

Varietal: 100 percent Malbec

Vineyards: 12-year-old vineyards in Tupungato, 914 meters above sea level

Malolactic fermentation:

100 percent

Aging: 7 months in 20 percent new American oak, 20 percent new French oak and 60 percent second- and third-used American oak

Finished alcohol: 13.5 percent

Rutini Cabernet-Malbec, 688 yuan

Malbec is a signature grape variety in Argentina. It has a strong blueberry aroma and a little bit of a dusty smell. The wine has good structure with smooth and sweet tannins.

It goes well with mushroom soup.

Varietal: 50 percent Malbec and 50 percent Cabernet Sauvignon

Vineyards: 12-year-old vineyards in Tupungato

Malolactic fermentation: 100 percent

Aging: 7 months in 20 percent new American oak, 20 percent new French oak and 60 percent second- and third-used American oak

Finished alcohol: 13.5 percent

Felipe Rutini, 3,800 yuan

This wine isn't made every year, only when there is a grape harvest. It's made of the most selective grapes, coming out an intense ruby red. It has notes of red fruits, chocolate and tobacco, which is given by the oak contact. Its total production is only 1,000 cases.

Varietal: 30 percent Merlot from Tupungato, 20 percent Malbec from La Consulta, and 50 percent Cabernet Sauvignon from Agrelo

Aging: 24 months

Finished alcohol: 13.5 percent

Rutini wines are available at Obelisco restaurant, call 8470 1666 for more information.



Photos provided by Rutini Wines

Obelisco – the only authentic Argentine grill in town



Rib-eye steak, 188 yuan Photos provided by Obelisco

Argentina has three national treasures: soccer, tango and grilled food. Argentineans eat a lot of meat, especially buffet-style barbecue. Due to its vast lands and climate, Argentina produces huge amounts of tender and tasty beef; the country is the largest consumer of beef in the world.

As the only Argentine grill in Beijing, Obelisco's beef is imported from Argentina. We recommend its rib-eye steak (188 yuan), which comes in a huge serving, double the size of what you'd find at most restaurants.

Empanada (20 yuan) is a popular snack filled with corn and beef. We also like the ice cream cake with nuts (55 yuan), which tastes sweet, icy and a bit sour.

Obelisco is spacious and divided into a grill restaurant, a coffee shop, a wine cellar that can store 40,000 bottles of wine and a yard with trees.

Obelisco

Where: 1 Laiguangying, Dong Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 11:30 am – 2:30 pm; 5-9 pm
Tel: 8470 1666
Cost: Average 250 yuan per person

Genawang Brazilian Grill – inexpensive all-you-can-eat

This Brazilian grill buffet chain with several spots in town is popular for its buffet, priced at 66 or 88 yuan. We recommend its tender shoulder beef, salty and chewy turkey meat roll, grilled beef tongue, garlic-flavored beef, grilled corn and grilled sweet potatoes.

The restaurant's chefs and staff are properly trained by Brazilian chefs.

Its salad bar has many options. We recommend the tuna salad and pineapple salad.

A Brazilian dance show starts every night at 6:30 pm.

Chaoawai Store

Where: North tower of Soho Shangdu, 8 Dongda-qiao Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 11am – 9 pm

Tel: 5900 5001

Caishikou store

Where: West building of Fenghua Haojing, 6 Guang'anmen Nei Dajie, Xuanwu District

Open: 11 am – 3 pm; 5-10 pm

Tel: 6356 0050

Haidian stire

Where: 13 Zhichun Dong Li, Kexueyuan Nan Lu, Haidian District

Open: 11:30 am – 2 pm; 5:30-9:30 pm

Tel: 8213 3026

Obelisco's cellar

Southern hake with Chardonnay sauce

Chardonnay sauce:

2 cups +1/4 cup chardonnay wine
1/2 cup lemon juice
2 tablespoons corn flour
125 grams butter, in lumps
1 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon white pepper

Fish:

2 1/2 cups walnuts, finely chopped
1/2 cup corn flour
2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon white pepper
180 grams fillets of hake, shinned
3-4 tablespoons olive oil

1. To prepare the sauce, place in a saucepan 2 cups of Chardonnay and the lemon juice, saving 1 tablespoon for later. Bring to a boil over high heat until reduced by half. In a bowl, mix the corn flour with the rest of the Chardonnay until smooth. Add to the boiling liquid while stirring; cook over low heat for 5 minutes. Turn off the heat and slowly add the butter while whisking. Add the tablespoon of lemon juice, season with salt and pepper and set aside.

2. Preparing the fish: In a plate, mix the walnuts with the corn flour, salt and pepper. Dip the fish fillets in the mix, flattening with your hand to cover well. Heat the oil in a frying pan, at medium to high heat, and put the fillets in. Reduce the heat to medium and cook for 3-4 minutes on each side or until the fish is done. Remove from heat.

3. For individual dishes, place some sauce in the middle and the fish on top. Garnish with cooked pasta and vegetables.



Photo provided by ProChile

Retrospective of New Ink Painting pioneer

By He Jianwei

Liu Kuo-sung, who turns 80 this year, has revolutionized painting through his 62 years of work. He based his career on challenging the traditions of Chinese ink painting and became known as one of the pioneers of the New Ink Painting movement.

The National Museum of China is currently showcasing 144 of his paintings from 1949 to 2011 in four exhibition halls. The earliest painting is a watercolor portrait painted on a postcard when Liu was a sophomore in high school called "Mother, Where Are You?" and the latest are two abstract paintings done this year depicting Jiuzhaigou, Sichuan Province.

Born in Anhui Province, Liu started learning watercolor painting at the age of 14. He moved to Taiwan in 1949 and studied oil painting techniques at National Taiwan Normal University and turned to oil painting.

One year after graduation, he founded May Art Association, a modern art movement.

In 1960, at 28, Liu realized it was inappropriate to blindly follow and imitate Western modern art, so he returned to Chinese ink painting.

When he taught at the University of Iowa, a Japanese sculp-



Photo provided by National Art Museum of China

ture professor said over tea break that the Japanese courtyard was representative of Oriental culture. Liu argued that the Japanese were merely imitating traditional Chinese courtyards. The professor admitted this was true but said that the traditional courtyard had fallen out of fashion in China, but was still popular in Japan.

Liu felt frustrated because he could not refute the Japanese professor's claim. But it was then that he became determined to keep traditional painting alive.

He sought a new approach to

art, inspired by both traditional Chinese painting – the style of the late Tang Dynasty (618-907) and the landscape painting style of the 10th and 11th centuries – and modern styles and techniques, such as abstract expressionism.

He has created a new language in ink painting, combining wild, curved calligraphy with abstract paintings.

"The other ancient cultures, such as Egyptian and Greek civilizations, have waned in influence. We advocate modernization for our economy and politics, but

we have ignored the modernization of our traditional culture," Liu said Monday before the exhibition's opening ceremony. "So I have proposed modernization for Chinese painting."

The Greatest Works of Liu Kuo-sung – Looking Back at 80

Where: National Art Museum of China, 1 Wusi Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: Until April 3, 9 am – 5 pm (no entry after 4 pm)

Admission: Free

Tel: 6400 6326

Friday, March 25

Nightlife Gangzi and ElimAy

Gangzi is from Inner Mongolia and sings in a traditional Mongolian style called khoomei; ElimAy is a band of expats whose vocalist sings in Kazak.

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiaodaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm
Admission: 40 yuan
Tel: 6401 4611

Exhibition Fade Away – Li Jia's Solo Exhibition

Li's paintings trace the passing of time and reveal the trauma and helplessness of loss.

Where: Space Station, 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until April 3, daily except Monday, 11 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free
Tel: 5978 9671

Movie

The Secret in Their Eyes (2009)

This Argentine crime thriller film is about a retired legal counselor who writes his first novel based on an unresolved rape-and-murder 25 years ago.

Where: China Film Archive, 3 Wenhuiyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: 7 pm
Admission: 20 yuan
Tel: 8601 6860



Sunday, March 27

Movie Lost in Mountain (2011)

Da Ta, together with Chang Bai, Yu Wei and Xiao Manzi, go through a mining area in the western part of Beijing in search of Bie Lei, a friend who has been missing for six months.

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7 pm
Admission: 15 yuan, 10 yuan for students
Tel: 8459 9269

Nightlife David Braid and Chang Jing Duo

The Canadian jazz pianist and composer Braid performs with Chang, a guzheng player. The two musicians hope to take listeners by surprise with the unique sounds of their instruments.

Where: Peking University Hall,

Saturday, March 26

Exhibition China Dream

Change is the norm rather than the exception in major cities such as Beijing and Shanghai. Clouds, rain, nails, burnt ephemera, collected objects, cloth, credit cards, advertising pamphlets, wood from demolition sites, and other elements and motifs appear in the works presented by three Shanghai based artists.

Where: Red Gate Gallery, 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until April 17, daily except Monday, 11 am – 6 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6525 1005

Movie Nanking (2007)

This documentary about the Nanking Massacre draws

information from letters and dairies by German businessman John Rabe and footage and interviews with surviving victims.

Where: Broadway Cinematheque, 2/F Building 4, north section of Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), 1 Xiangheyuan Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 7 pm
Admission: 40 yuan
Tel: 8438 8258 ext. 8008

Nightlife The Life Journey

This pop rock band has released one CD and one EP, and this month recorded a new album.

Where: Mako Livehouse, 36 Guangqu Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 8 pm
Admission: 70 yuan advance purchase, 80 yuan at the door
Tel: 5205 1112

5 Yiheyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: 7:30 pm
Tel: 6275 8452

Exhibition Xiao Se 2011 Solo Exhibition

With broad interests, Xiao turns the mundane into the surreal and constructs images of contemporary Chinese men and women in characteristically ambiguous spaces and attitudes.

Where: EK Projects, 22 International Art Plaza, 32 Baizhan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until March 31, daily except Monday, 11 am – 6 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 5807 4927



Upcoming

Nightlife Nephew

This Danish rock band became internationally renowned with its World Cup 2010 hit single "The Danish Way to Rock."

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-2 Zhangzihong Lu, Dongcheng District
When: March 30, 9 pm
Admission: 70 yuan advance purchase, 100 yuan at the door
Tel: 6404 2711

Stage in April

Concert

Westminster Boys' Choir

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 18 Zhaodengyu Lu, Xicheng District

When: April 5, 7:30 pm
Admission: 30-580 yuan
Tel: 6417 7845

Hilary Hahn and The English Chamber Orchestra

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: April 8, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-800 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Traditional Irish Music by the Blackwater Band

Where: National Library Concert Hall, 33 Zhongguancun Nan Dajie, Haidian District

When: April 9, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-380 yuan
Tel: 8854 5531

Li Yundi and China National Center for the Performing Arts Orchestra

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: April 23, 7:30 pm
Admission: 200-1,200 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Dance

Songs of the Wanderers by Cloud Gate Theater

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: April 1-2, 7:30 pm
Admission: 100-580 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Drama

Burnt by the Sun

Where: Capital Theater, 22 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: April 4-17, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-580 yuan, 40 yuan for students
Tel: 6524 6789

Opera

Bizet's Opera: Carmen

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: April 9-16, 7:30 pm
Admission: 160-880 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

(By He Jianwei)

Get your hands and feet in shape for summer

By Chu Meng

Hands are a woman's second face: a name card that cannot lie about age and class origin. Like feet, they go overworked and overlooked during the long cold days of winter.

As summer draws near, gloves are getting packed away as women pick up their sandals and head for the beauty salons. But if you don't want to spend too much money and time at the salon, you might try some of the following daily home care tips for beautiful hands and feet.



CFP Photo

Chen Jing, a 30-year-old office employee, works in a stressful environment at a local fashion magazine. She recently had a fight with her husband, who buried his Valentine's Day present, an iPad, in their closet.

"I never ignored him or was unhappy about the iPad. It was something I really wanted. But there were other problems I couldn't talk about," she complained. The high pressure of Chen's work caused her to develop an addiction to biting her nails.

This plus heavy housework after finishing redecorating has seriously damaged her fingers and hands.

"Touch-screen digital products are really cool and a way to show off, but you don't want to touch them in front of friends and clients when your nails and hands look as embarrassing as mine," she said.

First-aid for nails

For broken nails and overused hands and feet, it's best to start taking intensive nutrition supplements, Hou Yazhen, an 18-year-old hand and foot model, said.

Hou, a university freshman, has done several commercials for IT and fashion products. She said she spends two hours in the morning and two hours before going to bed to care for her hands and feet.

She gave some suggestions from a professional angle to help break bad habits and have more beautiful hands and feet.

1. Stop biting your nails: Nail biting is the easiest way to destroy a nice pair of hands. Worse yet, it's not sanitary. Most nail biting is the result of stress and anxiety or low self-esteem, among other social problems. Make a conscious effort to control your biting as soon as possible. There are other ways to distract oneself from work. If you can't stop, see a psychologist.

2. Nails as not tools: Don't use your nails to open cans or pull out staples. Avoid using them to poke, peel, scratch or pick at anything. This is an easy way to make your nails break, split or peel. Try to use your entire fingertip, and if that fails, find a more appropriate tool.

3. Wear gloves before doing housework: Remember to wear rubber gloves while doing housework and gardening.

Household products such as laundry detergents, toilet detergents, oil removers and dish soaps contain harmful chemicals. When the chemicals get onto your nails, they can become brittle. Chemicals and intensive contact with water will also damage your skin. Gardening and moving furniture can both easily cause broken nails and coarse skin.

4. Wear heels only when you must: Wear simple, comfortable walking shoes as much as possible. It will keep your feet moist and avoid calluses. "The only

time I wear heels is when I work. I never wear heels on a regular day, because I need to protect my feet," Hou Yazhen said.

While walking with heels, weight of the entire body is concentrated onto calves and then transferred onto the heels. The heavy weight will raise friction and damage to the skin of the heels. The odd angle can also deform the toes.

5. Use an intensive nutrition supplement: For overused hands and overlooked feet, intensive moisture and oil therapy is needed. Apply a moisturizer each time your hands come in contact with water. Chemically enhanced moisturizers that contain urea, lactic acid or glycerin oil are even more efficient at binding water to the skin.

After a shower, do not forget to apply oily lotion to your feet and ankles and wear socks immediately. Every night before bedtime, massage your hands and feet with a cream or olive oil for a few minutes.

Establish a daily routine

After the first intensive treatment, it's important to adopt a daily care routine to keep your skin and nails beautiful.

Wash your hands with amiable soap and soak them in warm water for five minutes each day. After that, apply an oil-based hand and nail cream. Use a wooden stick to push back the cuticles and clean under the nail bed. File your nails to the desired shape and buff them smooth. Apply cuticle oil to the cuticles and massage it in.

Rounded or squared nails are the most popular shapes for professions that require working with your hands, such as typing. "Do remember to file nails in one solid movement, and not back and forth, to avoid chipping and splitting," Hou said.

Try to apply a hand mask or hand wax once a month. "For the ultimate treatment, you can buy a hand-wax machine for 200 yuan to use at home. It looks like a yogurt machine," she said.

When it switches on, special wax for the hands and feet melts in the small basin. Switch off the machine and allow the wax to cool slightly before rubbing it into the hands and feet. Let the wax solidify over 15 minutes before attempting to remove it.

Spend some time pampering your feet once a week. Use a pumice stone to scrub away dead skin from the bottom of feet and heels. Trim and file your toenails, moisturize your feet with olive oil and pull on your socks.

"You can also heat the moisturizer in a container for 5 to 10 seconds in a microwave. Add a few drops of Lavender or Rosemary oil for a calming and soothing sensation," Hou said.

Other tips on nail care

Based on Hou's modeling experiences, she said there are a few other problems to be aware of in your daily activities to ensure your nails look their best.

1. Protect your fingers and toes from repeated rubbing to avoid calluses and blisters.

2. Extra protection is required in sports. Wear finger cushions to support your hands when playing volleyball, basketball and baseball or bowling. Keep blisters from forming when playing soccer, skiing or cycling by wearing shoes with extra room around the toes.

3. When writing or knitting, cushion your fingers. Try to trim your nails short when you are working at a computer or wear finger pads. If you play games for an extended time, take a break to let your fingers and palms recover from the extended friction.

4. Use a fine-textured nail cutter to avoid splits when trimming your nails. High-quality products are made with stainless steel and ensure a sharp cut. Blunt tools split nails.

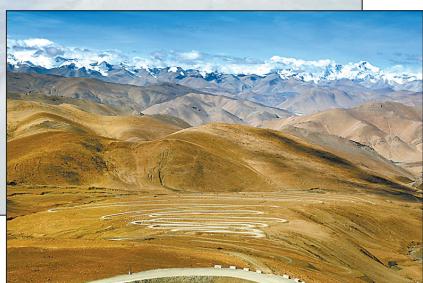
5. Frosted nail polishes dry out your nails faster than non-frosted ones. Use fast-drying nail polishes and avoid removing the polish too frequently. The chemicals can be very harsh.

Taking the long way to Tibet and back



Tan Xiaomin, an outdoor enthusiast, is hitchhiking her way to Tibet and back.

Photos by Tan Xiaomin



By Zhang Dongya

The dream route for outdoor aficionados is the Sichuan-Tibet Line and Qinghai-Tibet Line, which offer splendid views and satisfy the hiker's appetite for challenge.

But for Tan Xiaomin, 25, the route is but a footpath on a bigger journey. She just completed hiking the Sichuan-Tibet Line this week, and already her sights are on bigger roads.

Tan, who began her journey in Beijing last month, aims to return to Beijing through the deserts of Gansu Province and grasslands of Inner Mongolia.

Beijing Today is following her on her incredible journey via phone calls and the Internet, trying to catch a glimpse of all that she sees.

Reaching Qinghai

On Monday, Tan finished the Sichuan-Tibet route and lodged in a small tavern in Yanshiping, or Stone Ground for Wild Goose, a small plateau town in Tibet.

As a border town between Tibet and Qinghai, Yanshiping is accustomed to welcoming commuters. But few have logged as many kilometers as Tan – and few have as far to go. As the poet Robert Frost says, there are "miles to go before I sleep."

It is 510 kilometers from Yanshiping to Golmud, Qinghai Province, which is Tan's next stop.

"It was chilly today, windy with snow," Tan said. "I went over to Tanggula and got a free ride to the town ..."

A lover of challenges

Tan, who is from Jiangsu Province, spent four years studying at a vocational school in Beijing. She fell in love with outdoor activities as a freshman and began hiking around Beijing.

Last year, she took half a month to travel through Shanxi Province by herself, which was the most challenging thing she did before the "Tibet Plan."

At the end of last year, she began planning her trip through Tibet. Her route would take her from Beijing through four provinces to Tibet, then to Qinghai and northwest through Gansu Province before hitting Inner Mongolia.

"I enjoy the vagrant life and adventure," she said.

Tan posted her plan on Lüye, a club for outdoor enthusiasts. When no other travelers wanted to take part, Tan quit her job and started off by herself.



She left Beijing on February 10 and planned to make it to Tibet in 40 days and back to Beijing in 105 days. But the journey went smoother than expected; she reached Markham, a small Tibetan county on the highway interchange between Sichuan, Tibet and Yunnan, on March 8. She expects to finish her journey by the end of April or by mid-May at the latest.

A difficult journey

With only a large backpack and sleeping bag, Tan has been the definition of budget traveler. She is trying to finish her journey while spending as little money as possible.

Along the way, Tan camps out at night and cooks food with a gas stove she keeps in her bag.

But recently it has been too cold to stay outside. "I would have to lodge in hotels," she said, searching for the cheapest hotels that charge 10 or 20 yuan per night. Occasionally a warmhearted stranger will take her in for free.

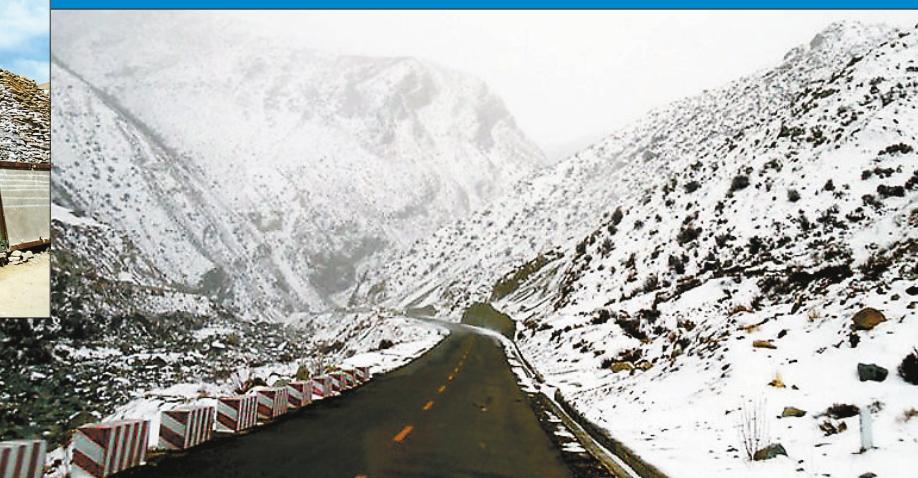
So far, Tan has only spent about 1,000 yuan.

The journey has been marked with moments of sublime wonder and also frightening encounters. When she was in Henan Province, she was almost robbed. In Zhengzhou, Tan found that the back of her pants were slit open; she thought her pants had gotten caught in some briars, but when she took it to a tailor, she was told that the slit was the result of a pickpocket's knife. Tan later learned that pickpockets are rampant in many places around Henan.

Continued on page 21...

The Sichuan-Tibet Line and Qinghai-Tibet Line are many outdoor lovers' dream routes, which offer splendid views and true adventure.

CFP Photos



Local Tibetan kids Tan met along the way

Photos by Tan Xiaomin

CFP Photo

*...continued from page 20*

Unlike Jack Kerouac's experiences while writing *On the Road*, hitchhiking across China has proved to be rather difficult. Tan has discovered that drivers aren't usually keen to trust strangers on the road.

"During bad times, I get a ride only after getting waved off by 20 vehicles," Tan said. "Then they'll ask for money."

But there have also been good experiences. "Some drivers back up to pick me up," Tan said.

She has taken all kinds of vehicles: tricycles, tractors, trucks, open wagons, SUVs, minibuses and private cars.

All in all, Tan said she has been fortunate to meet so many people who offer a helping hand.

From Markham to Zogong in Tibet, she encountered a group of young men walking toward her. "I was scared because I thought they were going to rob me, but they helped me with my backpack," Tan said. "They were all Tibetan kids dressed in rags, who actually could use help themselves. But all I could offer were some chocolates. I wish I could've done more."

March 5 was a lucky day for Tan. She was on the Ancient Tea and Horse Road in Ya'an in Sichuan Province and feeling very tired. Few vehicles passed her way. But a driver on his way to a factory in Gansu picked her up and, when he heard about her Tibet Plan, offered to take her to Luding County. He drove two hours out of his way to Luding Bridge before turning back toward Gansu.

"We talked about Tibet along the way, and he knows quite a lot about its

history and folk customs," Tan said.

That evening, she went to a small chophouse selling liangfen, cold bean noodles in chili sauce. The family who owns the store served her for free and put her up in their home for the night.

Unprecedented views

Along the way, Tan got to see the sort of sights only the very lucky or very determined get to see.

In Shaanxi Province, she encountered black-river wetlands forming a water landscape. The "black" river, which stretches more than 80 kilometers along the reserve, is actually clear and blue. "That blue is unique and can't be seen elsewhere," Tan said.

In Tibet, a small town called Rawok

in between Paksho and Pome counties is dubbed "the most beautiful part" of the Sichuan-Tibet Line. The first section included a climb up Anjou la Mountain, where Tan encountered an avalanche and was stuck for the day. The pristine snow made the experience worthwhile.

In Rawok, there is a long and narrow lake that extends more than 10 kilo-

meters. With the snow from the day before, a layer of snow covered the lake, which glittered tranquilly. "Hiking along was the most enjoyable thing ever," Tan said.

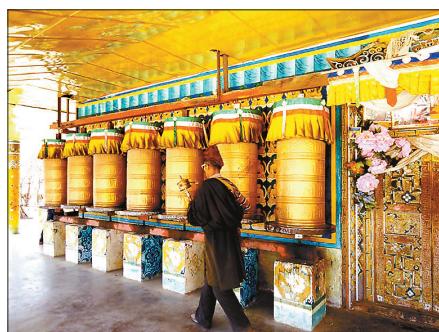
And near Pome County, an area of thick old trees stood like skyscrapers, with high branches jutting toward the sun.

Then there was a snowstorm: "the big snowflakes not just falling, but rushing headlong down," Tan said.

And to think, the journey is only half over. Or half-begun.

Tips

1. Make sure you always have water with you. You can ask for free water from households and small restaurants on the way.
2. Do some bargaining when you make a purchase or lodge in some place. There is always room for bargaining.
3. Take some cash; take the post bank card if you take cards, as there are post offices even in some small places that don't have banks.
4. Be polite when hitchhiking a ride. Remember to say "thank you" even if the driver rejects you.
5. Do not hike or hitchhike at night.
6. Use a cold-weather sleeping bag this season and wear warm clothes!



Inside a Tibetan temple



One vehicle Tan rode in on her way to Tibet

Dining

Surf and turf at Blu Lobster

Blu Lobster

Come to Blu Lobster before the end of March for "surf and turf," the best of the land and sea on one plate. Our a la carte menu features fish and meat combinations like Veal Oscar, Beef Lobster and Sea Bass Cassoulet.

Where: Blu Lobster, Shangri-La Beijing, 29 Zizhuyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: Until March 31

Tel: 6841 2211 ext. 6727



Easter Sunday

Delights at One East

Celebrate Easter Sunday with your family and friends at One East, Hilton Beijing. Enjoy an afternoon that starts with lavish appetizers and soups followed by the chef's recommendation: a slow-roasted whole lamb "served from the trolley." This indulgent journey ends with a complimentary Easter cocktail and a sumptuous New Orleans banana foster flambé served with vanilla ice cream, freshly prepared by your tableside.

What more could you ask for on this holiday? Come and celebrate your Easter at the one and only One East.

Where: One East, 1 Dongfang Lu, Chaoyang District

Cost: 198 yuan; add 98 yuan for

wine and beer (15 percent gratuity)
Tel: 5865 5030

Happy Easter

Celebrate this festival the whole weekend. Take time to eat, drink and savor the experience with family and friends at our overwhelmingly mouth-watering buffet. Join the amazing party and try Easter Rabbitini brought to you by our Easter bunnies. Our gift gallery is stocked with beautifully decorated ornamental Easter eggs.

Where: The Westin Beijing Financial Street, 9B Financial Street, Xicheng District

When: Easter Weekend Buffet, lunch, April 23; dinner, April 22-23; Easter Day Brunch, April 24

Cost: Easter Weekend Buffet, 288 yuan (lunch) or 338 yuan (dinner) with soft drinks and punch; Easter Day Brunch, 328 yuan with soft drinks and juice or 398 yuan with cocktails, champagne, wine and beer; children 12 and under 168 yuan (15 percent gratuity)

Tel: reserve your place to start celebration at 6629 7810



Scotched

Dying for a good drink? Well you don't have to travel to Scotland in the United Drinkdom to sample the kinds of malt whiskey we're selling. Aria Bar brings the best of the Highlands to Beijing! Come sample its wide

variety of single-malt whiskey!

Where: Aria Bar, 2F China World Hotel, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: April 1-30
Tel: 6505 2266 ext. 36.

Hip champagne brunch with creative kids' programs

The Hilton's award-winning champagne brunch, now in its second year, is intimate and fun, unexpected and unsurpassed. This year the hotel is adding creative programs to its popular play area.

Come and enjoy tempting food, an open bar, free champagne and jazz vibes from the house band.

Children can enjoy their own buffet in the worry-free kids' paradise where they will learn from the creative teachers from My Little Mozart, 3i Art Center and The Familiier.

Where: Hilton Beijing Wangfujing, 8 Wangfujing Dong Jie, Dongcheng District

When: Sundays
Tel: 5812 8888
Email: wangfujing@hilton.com

Lobsters on dishes of Nishimura

The new recipes on Nishimura's a la carte menu are set to inspire and fulfill lobster lovers' cravings. Three types of lobsters are being prepared as teppan, sashimi and salad now through the end of this month.

Where: Blu Lobster, Shangri-La Beijing, 29 Zizhuyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: Until March 31
Tel: 68412211 ext. 6719

Easter Brunch at The Ritz-Carlton, Beijing

Celebrate the true spirit of Easter at Aroma with a sumptuous and pleasant Easter brunch with an assortment of Chinese, Japanese, European and Indian dishes. Our elegant and comfortable dining environment is sure to satisfy your taste buds. Come and have a joyful holiday with your family and friends and participate in our Easter egg hunt!

The Easter Brunch on April 24 is from 11:30 am to 3 pm and costs 598 yuan. The brunch includes free soft drinks, juice, local beer and house wines and champagnes. The children's brunch at 228 yuan includes an Easter egg hunt and exclusive Chocolate Easter bunny.

Where: Aroma, Ritz-Carlton, Beijing, 83 A Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District

When: April 24, 11:30 am - 3 pm

Cost: 598 yuan per person

Tel: 5908 8777

Email: re.bjsrz.restaurant.reservation@ritzcarlton.com



Hotel



Suite deal at Marco Polo Parkside

Discover a welcoming home away from home at Marco Polo Parkside, Beijing. Relax and unwind in distinctive suites with exquisitely appointed sleeping and living areas.

Book now and enjoy special rates as low as 1,355 yuan per night. Benefits include daily buffet breakfast, express check-in and check-out, all-day coffee, tea and light refreshments, complimentary evening cocktails during Happy Hour (5:30 pm to 6:30 pm), complimentary use of the Club Lounge meeting room for a maximum 2 hours per day and in-room coffee- and tea-making facilities.

Where: Marco Polo Parkside, Beijing, 78 Anli Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until October 31

Cost: from 1,355 yuan per night (15 percent gratuity)

Tel: 5963 6688

Marriott opens Renaissance Sanya Resort & Spa

Marriott International has recently added the stylish 507-room Renaissance Sanya Resort & Spa to its portfolio of hotels in China.

Set on a stretch of pristine beach in the luxury resort area of Haitang Bay, a recently created National Coast, the Renaissance Sanya Resort & Spa is a tropical palace with breathtaking oriental designs on tropical Hainan Island.

Developed by Sanya Zhonggang Fishery, the Renaissance Sanya Resort & Spa is expands travelers options at China's most renowned resort destination. "We are delighted to have worked with such committed partners on this world-class resort," said Tina Edmundson, senior vice president of Lifestyle Brands for Marriott International.

"We have created a true life-style resort experience though modern design and the unique life-style element of our Renaissance Hotels brand. We are confident this resort will prove a popular addition to the hotel scene in Sanya," she said.

The resort offers seven food and beverage outlets that are based on constellations and reflect the Sanya night sky.

All guest rooms have wireless and high-speed Internet access, iPod docking stations, flat screen TV's and state-of-the-art technology.

(By Jackie Zhang)

Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Wang Yu at wangyu2008@ynet.com.

Refund and pay again

By Han Manman

Many Chinese students believe studying prefixes is a good way to understand a new word and enhance vocabulary.

It's not always so straightforward though.

Chen Xin is the leader of a student club and in charge of organizing two-day outings to Tianjin. In past years, every member paid him 100 yuan in advance, which covers all meals and accommodation.

But sometimes the costs exceed 100 yuan, which is why Chen has decided to ask each member to pay him an extra 100 yuan, which he will repay if it doesn't get spent.

Chen has been working hard lately to nail down prefixes. He knows "retro" means past, backward and behind; "semi" means half; "milli" is thousandths; "micro" is small.

Like all good students, he was eager to incorporate his learning into his daily conversation, so when he found out an American girl was part of his club, he approached her.

"I need to refund 100 yuan for you," Chen said to the girl, Elisa. Chen knew the prefix "re-" meant again and "fund" means capital or cash, so he thought refund must have meant "to



fund again."

Chen showed Elisa a 100-yuan bill.

Elisa snatched the bill out of his hand and said, "Chen! You're such a good man. You mean I don't need to pay for the outing? Thank you so much."

"Wait," Chen thought, "I thought I was clear in that I needed another 100 yuan."

"Sorry, I meant you need to give me another 100," he said.

Elisa then understood. She laughed and paid the money back to Chen.

"You know the meaning of 'refund'?" Elisa asked.

"Pay the money again?"

"No, it means repay, to give the money back."

"So if I want to say the overpayment will be paid back after the outing, I could say excessive money will be refunded, right?"

"Yes, you are so smart!"

Chen brought up another example: Chinese consumers demanding refunds for the salt they bought in the mistaken belief it would protect against radiation in case of a Japanese nuclear crisis.

"I'm sure that you've fully understood the meaning of the word," Elisa said.

Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please send a picture of it to wangyu2008@ynet.com together with your name and address.

Chicken Bacterium Soup

By Terry Boyd-Zhang

There used to be a restaurant near my house with "fried crap" on the menu. It was a fish restaurant so I suspect it was a typo, but you never know.

Edible parts don't get wasted here, and sometimes "half chicken" takes on a whole new meaning. Anyway, the reassuring thing about this soup is that there is only one type of bacterium in it, not a whole mess of bacteria.

Let's take a closer look. The online dictionary neiku.com and Google Translate do not translate this much better: *yeshanjun* becomes "bacteria hills." Yikes! Break it apart: *Ye* means wild as in "wild dog"; *shan* means mountain, hill; *jun* means bac-



terium but an alternative meaning is fungus, a mushroom.

Next is *wuji*. *Wuya* means crow and *wu* on its own means black. *Ji* is chicken and there is another meaning which is inappropriate to mention

here. So, "black chicken" and, for all of you not familiar with domestic fowl, a Taihe silky fowl or a silkie, also called a black-boned chicken, is a bird indigenous to China, especially delicious in Jiangxi Province.

The bird has silky white feathers with dark skin, bones, feet, eyes and beak. It is very good in *tang* (soup).

In other words, it's chicken mushroom soup for 36 yuan. "Open space mountain bacterium crow chicken soup" wasn't what my mom fed me when I had a cold — mine was just chicken broth, and I feed my own kids chicken noodle. That's a bit different than chicken bacterium, but, you know, it may be just what the doctor ordered.

Blacklist

This is a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then watch out for this page each week

1. Wait two or three months before it is identified.

Professor Zhu Shida (ZS): Wait can be used transitively or intransitively. When it is used transitively, we may have for an example: He is waiting his opportunities. They are waiting orders from higher authorities. In the sample sentence, "wait" is obviously used intransitively. In this case, the adverbial of time will have to be led by the preposition "for": Wait for two or three months before it is identified. Similarly, They wait for a bus. Time and tide wait for no man.

Terry Boyd-Zhang (TBZ): We'd have to look at the context, but I'd like to change "is" to a future tense as well: Wait for two or three months before it will be identified. Or leave it out and add a noun: Wait two or three months before identification.

2. Acting irritable

ZS: In English, there are indeed cases in which the predicate is followed by an adjective. For instance, He remained spirited long after he won the game. The water tower was kept intact during the earthquake. Such cases are fairly limited. The verb to act is definitely not included in these verbs. So you will have to change the adjective into an adverb: Acting irritably.

TBZ: Correct. Although we do have the spoken expression "acting big," which means showing off and trying to act older or more important than you really are.

3. Photographers have held exhibitions of photos shot using cell phones.

ZS: The problem lies in the attributive clause. If we make the attributive clause complete, it would be: the photos that had been shot by using cell phones. The phrase "using cell phones" indicates a way of means, a manner. So, it is necessary to add the preposition "by" to make it an adverbial of means. I'll show you another example: The nuclear reactor is buried by using tons of cement. You will not say: the nuclear reactor is buried by cement. Right?

TBZ: I think Professor Zhu is correct, but perhaps we drop the "by" in spoken language (or make it so light that only the most trained ear can hear it).

4. The pageant was last Thursday.

ZS: The pageant is an occasion. It can not be a date. You can only say: The pageant was held last Thursday. Or: The pageant fell on Thursday last. Similarly, you cannot say: National Day is October 1. You will have to say: The National Day falls on October 1.

TBZ: I think this one would fall into the spoken language versus written language category – and written language is usually more formal than spoken.

5. A flurry of commentary

ZS: "A flurry of" always indicates a plural number when it is followed by a countable noun. It cannot possibly be a singular like this case, as "commentary" is a countable noun. It should be: a flurry of commentaries, a series of commentaries, a number of commentaries. I will give you an example: The Chinese table tennis player overpowered his Danish opponent by executing a flurry of powerful smashes and spins. He committed a flurry of errors before succumbing to his opponent. However, "a flurry of" can also be followed by an abstract noun or uncountable noun. For instance, a flurry of wind, a flurry of alarm.

TBZ: "Light flurries" is a weather term in Canada. It means it's snowing so you had better have your emergency kit in the trunk of the car and start to work a whole lot earlier.



Tron: Legacy (2011)

Movie of the week

Last year, 3D films were all the rage. The enthusiasm seems to have carried over to *Tron: Legacy*. Once again, the critics seem entirely out of touch with popular opinion.

This film is actually quite decent, with well-placed, eye-popping visual effects, a great soundtrack and a compelling storyline. Science fiction fans who manage to track down a BluRay print are sure to find it two hours well spent.

Synopsis

Sam Flynn, a rebellious 27-year-old, is haunted by the mysterious disappearance of his father Kevin Flynn, a man once known as the world's leading video-game developer.

When Sam investigates a strange signal sent from the old Flynn's Arcade, he finds himself pulled into a digital world where Kevin has been trapped for 20 years.



Scene 1

(Alan Bradley is at Sam's apartment waiting for him.)

S: Why are you in my apartment, Alan?

A: You don't answer your phone. Where've you been, Sam?

S: Oh, you know, when I was 12, I appreciated the surrogate-father (1) thing. But come on. I got it all under control now.

A: Oh. Clearly!

S: You want to help me with my homework? Like old times? Have a catch?

A: You know, you got a pretty nice view here. Heard you did a triple axel off of her a few hours ago. Rough landing, huh?

S: Could have been worse.

A: I also thought your message to the board was very clever.

S: Did you like that? That was Marv's idea. Alan, are we really going to do this again? Do I really look like I'm ready to run a Fortune 500 company?

A: No. And truthfully, the company is pretty happy with where you are, too.

S: I bet. That way they can keep doing whatever they want.

A: You know, I guess what I find curious is the crazy charities, the annual prank on the company. You have an interesting way of being disinterested, Sam.

S: Why are you here, Alan?

A: I was paged (2) last night.

S: Oh, man, still rocking the pager? Good for you.

A: Yeah, your dad once told me I had to sleep with it, and I still do. Page came from your dad's office at the arcade.

S: So? That number's been disconnected for 20 years.

A: Sam, two nights before he disappeared, he came to my house. "I've cracked it," he kept saying. He was talking about genetic algorithms, quantum teleportation. He said he was about to change everything. Science, medicine, religion. He wouldn't have left that, Sam. He wouldn't have left you.

S: Oh, Alan. You're the only one who still believes that. He's either dead or chilling in Costa Rica. Probably both. Look, I'm sorry. I'm tired, and I smell like jail. Let's just reconvene in another couple of years, huh? What do you say?

A: Here. These are the keys to the arcade. I haven't gone over there yet. I thought you should be the one.

S: Alan, you're acting like I'm gonna find him sitting there working. Just, "Hey, kiddo. Lost track of time."

A: Wouldn't that be something?

S: What? You son of a gun (3).

Scene 2

(Sam finally meets his father, Kevin Flynn, at Tron.)

K: Quorra. I dreamed of Tron. First time in years.

Q: It's a sign.

K: A sign, my dear apprentice, of a weary soul. I'm afraid something's happened.

Q: Something has hap-

pened. We have a guest.

K: There are no guests, kiddo.

(Sam comes in.)

K: Sam ... Long time. You have no idea. You're ... You're here.

S: I'm here.

K: You're big.

S: You're ...old.

K: How did you get here?

S: Alan came over.

K: Bradley.

S: Yeah. He got your page. I found your office under the arcade.

K: Oh, the page. Of course. Clu had him on the light cycle grid. I intervened. Oh, dinner soon. We'll talk then.

S: He never thought he'd see you again.

S: Yeah.

Q: Vintage. Flynn built it many cycles ago for the games. It doesn't get out as much as it used to, but it's still the fastest thing on the Grid. Do you know it (4)? His patience usually beats out (5) my more aggressive strategy.

Scene 3

(Quorra, Sam and Kevin are at dinner.)

K: How old are you now, Sam? You should be 27.

S: Yes, 27.

K: Do you attend a college?

S: Caltech.

K: Caltech. My alma mater till I dropped out (6).

S: For work? Job? ENCOM?

K: No. I check in once a year. Wife, girlfriend?

S: A dog. Marvin.

K: Well, dogs ... dogs are cool. I'm sure you must have a few questions of your own, Sam.

S: Actually, just one.

K: Why I never came home? Those nights when I went to the office, I'm sure you've figured it out by now, I was coming here. Human form into digital space. Heavy stuff. But I also had you. I had ENCOM. I couldn't be in here all the time. I needed partners to help out.

S: Tron and Clu?

K: That's right. Tron was created by Alan for the old system. I brought him here to protect this one. Clu was my creation. A program designed to create a perfect world.

Vocabulary

1. surrogate-father: a man who takes over the functions of the real father.

2. be paged: get a message

3. son of a gun: to express annoyance, disappointment, or surprise

4. Do you know it?: Have you heard of it?

5. beat out: defeat

6. drop out: to stop attending school

(By Huang Daohen)